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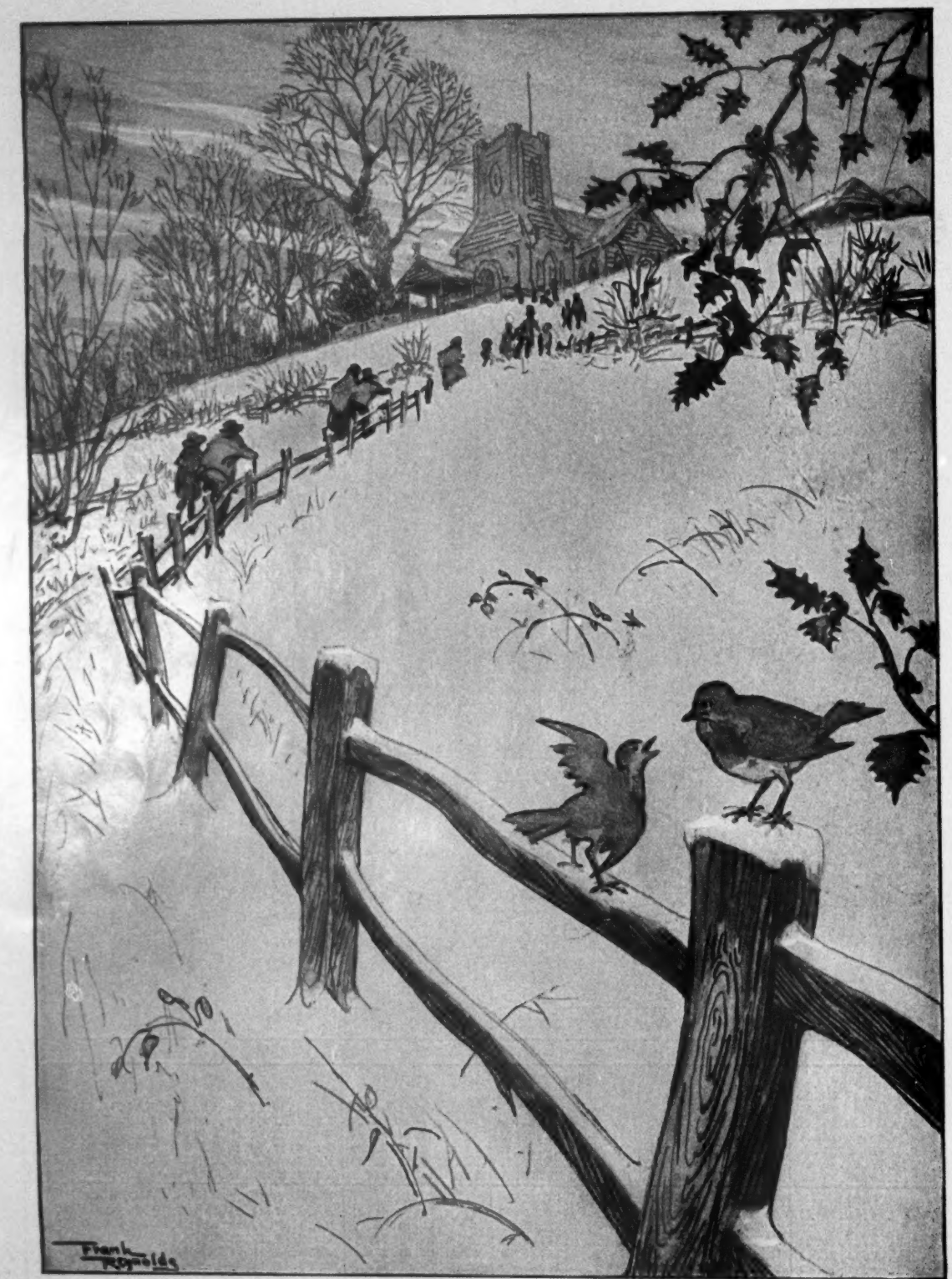
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CALENDAR MCMXXXVII

January	February	March	April	May	June
S .3.10.17.24.31	S ... 7.14.21.28	S ... 7.14.21.28	S ... 4.11.18.25	S .2. 9.16.23.30	S ... 6.13.20.27
M .4.11.18.25...	M .1. 8.15.22...	M .1. 8.15.22.29	M ... 5.12.19.26	M .3.10.17.24.31	M ... 7.14.21.28
Tu .5.12.19.26...	Tu .2. 9.16.23...	Tu .2. 9.16.23.30	Tu ... 6.13.20.27	Tu .4.11.18.25...	Tu .1. 8.15.22.29
W .6.13.20.27...	W .3.10.17.24...	W .3.10.17.24.31	W ... 7.14.21.28	W .5.12.19.26...	W .2. 9.16.23.30
Th .7.14.21.28...	Th .4.11.18.25...	Th .4.11.18.25...	Th .1. 8.15.22.29	Th .6.13.20.27...	Th .3.10.17.24...
F 1.8.15.22.29...	F .5.12.19.26...	F .5.12.19.26...	F .2. 9.16.23.30	F .7.14.21.28...	F .4.11.18.25...
S 2.9.16.23.30...	S .6.13.20.27...	S .6.13.20.27...	S .3.10.17.24...	S 1.8.15.22.29...	S .5.12.19.26...

July	August	September	October	November	December
S . 4.11.18.25	S .1. 8.15.22.29	S ... 5.12.19.26	S .3.10.17.24.31	S ... 7.14.21.28	S ... 5.12.19.26
M ... 5.12.19.26	M .2. 9.16.23.30	M ... 6.13.20.27	M .4.11.18.25...	M .1. 8.15.22.29	M ... 6.13.20.27
Tu ... 6.13.20.27	Tu .3.10.17.24.31	Tu ... 7.14.21.28	Tu .5.12.19.26...	Tu .2. 9.16.23.30	Tu ... 7.14.21.28
W ... 7.14.21.28	W .4.11.18.25...	W .1. 8.15.22.29	W .6.13.20.27...	W .3.10.17.24...	W .1. 8.15.22.29
Th .1. 8.15.22.29	Th .5.12.19.26...	Th .2. 9.16.23.30	Th .7.14.21.28...	Th .4.11.18.25...	Th .2. 9.16.23.30
F .2. 9.16.23.30	F .6.13.20.27...	F .3.10.17.24...	F 1.8.15.22.29...	F .5.12.19.26...	F .3.10.17.24.31
S .3.10.17.24.31	S .7.14.21.28...	S .4.11.18.25...	S 2.9.16.23.30...	S .6.13.20.27...	S .4.11.18.25...



Provocative Redbreast. "WELL, I'M OFF, RATHER THAN BE A PARTY TO SUCH A CONVENTIONAL CHRISTMAS PICTURE!"



PRESENTS (A MORAL STORY)



". . . THEN OF COURSE THEY REALISED THAT I WAS BRITISH."



When Paul was a young man, many years ago, his ambition was to become a great painter.



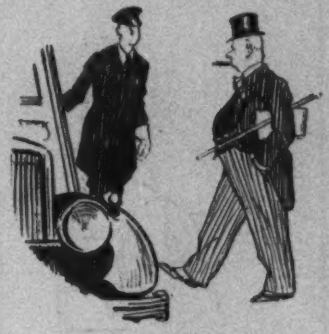
And one day in payment for his bed and board he painted an inn-sign.



And for years it hung in the wind and rain.



And Paul gave up Art and went into business—



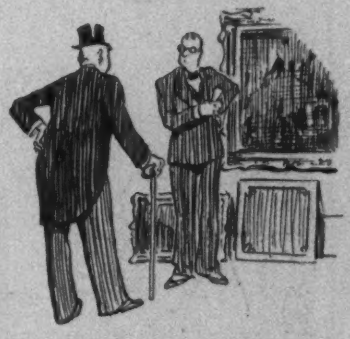
and prospered.



And still the sign hung in the sun and wind.



And Paul, now a wealthy man, became a collector.



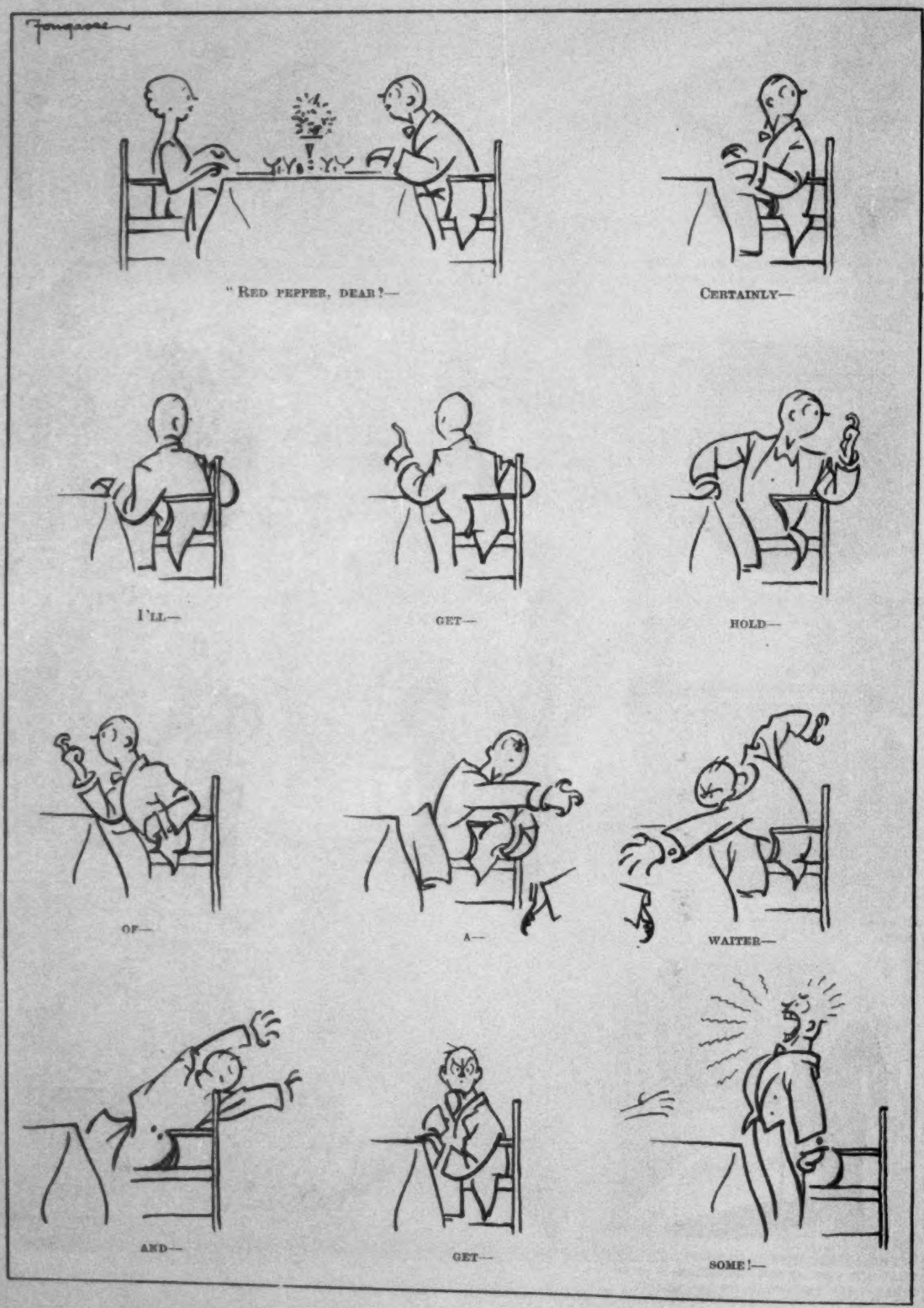
And one day a dealer sold him for a large sum an old painting mellow with age.

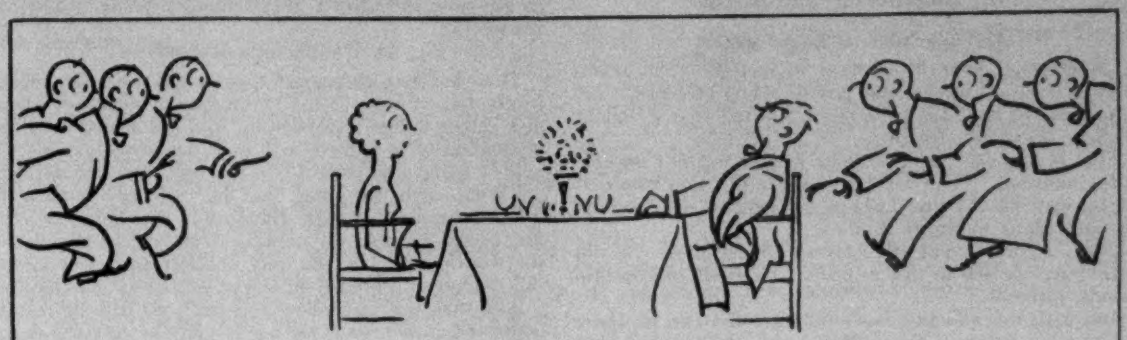


And afterwards it dawned on Paul that the gem of his collection was no other than the work of his youth—

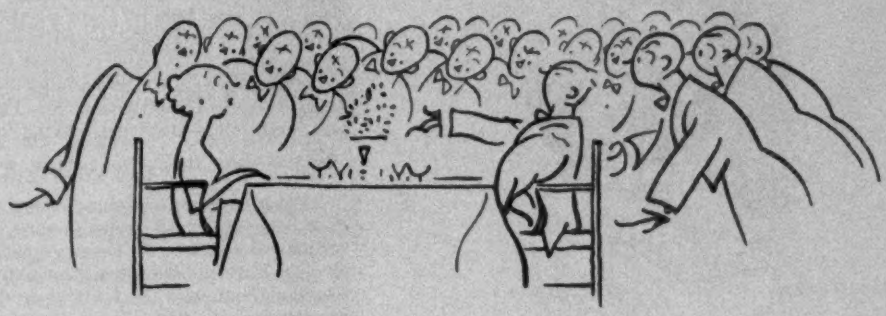


and, being a sentimentalist, he took it back to "The Jolly Horseman."

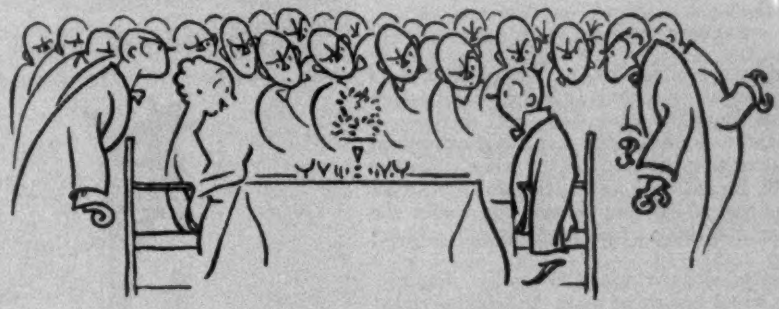

"Red pepper, dear?—
Certainly—
I'll—
get—
hold—
of—
a—
waiter—
and—
get—
some!—



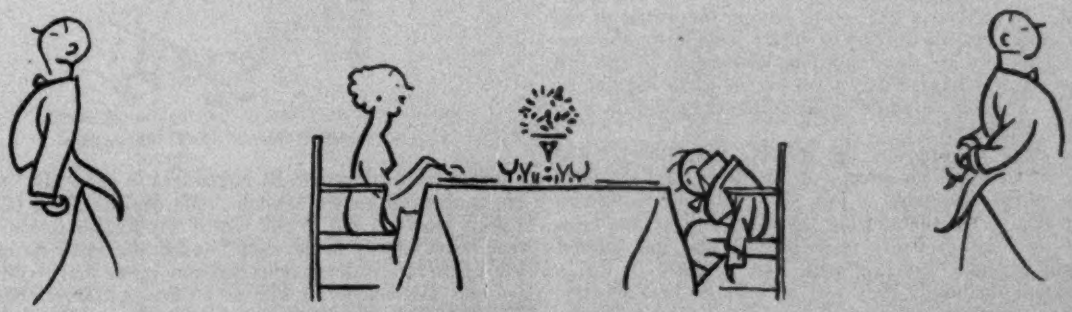
"RED PEPPER, PLEASE!—



FOR THIS LADY."



"OH, IT DIDN'T MATTER, REALLY—



I'VE MANAGED WITHOUT."

The Bogchester Chronicles

The Grey Monk of Bogge Manor

"Meadows, I have bequeathed to you the large brown overcoat and my second-best pair of riding-breeches. Let Mrs. Meadows have the table-linen, and tell Henry that he can keep his chauffeur's suit.

"For it may well be that your master will not be here in the morning. Who can tell the fate of those who cast mortal eyes on the dread shape of Geoffrey de Bouillon, the Grey Monk of Bogge Manor!

"Nay, Henry, I will drive myself to the house. I will involve no one else in this venture. Farewell, old faithful friends, farewell!"

And with this affecting leave-taking I drive on to where the long low shape of Bogge Manor rises dark and sinister



"Dark and sinister against the moonlit storm-wracked sky."

against the moonlit storm-wracked sky. Six hundred years ago within these grey and crumbling walls the black-hearted monk Geoffrey de Bouillon most foully did to death a brother-priest. And now, so rumour says, his ghostly form has of late been revisiting the scene of his crime when the moon is at the full. He has been seen flitting down the dark and winding passages, while from behind him comes the blood-curdling sound of his victim, choking and sobbing out his life.

Such at least is the story, vouched for by the domestic staff of the Manor, which has grown up in the neighbourhood of Bogchester since the house, after a lapse of many years, has at last found a tenant.

It is a story to appal the stoutest heart on such a night as this. Nevertheless Sir George Gorge, the owner of the Manor, and I are not the sort to shirk a plain duty, however terrible, and we are determined to investigate to the full this rumour which is not only alarming the whole neighbourhood but is liable to cause considerable depreciation in a valuable property.

As I draw up opposite the massive front-door of the Manor Sir George's car sweeps up the drive, and the next minute he has descended to join me. In a low undertone he explains to me that during the afternoon he has been visited by Captain Featherstonehaugh, who has offered to come to-night, bringing with him a friend of his, a professional medium. They will, he says, be here shortly.

While admitting the usefulness of an expert in an important investigation such as this, I cannot feel that the Captain is the type of man I should willingly choose for a crisis. But it is too late to raise objections now; we advance to the door and send a heavy knock echoing through the house.

An Ungracious Reception

There is a long pause, and then at last the door is opened by the tenant himself, Mr. Perkinson, an elderly gentleman of a rather difficult disposition, who has shown very little inclination to co-operate with us in our investigations. He holds a lantern in front of him and peers out into the night.

"Well, come in, come in," he calls out impatiently. "There are quite enough draughts in this house of yours, Sir George, without my needing to stand half the night at the front-door. I'm the only one left now; this infernal talk of ghosts frightened the last servant away this morning."

And with this ungracious reception we pass on into the house and gather round the big fireplace in the stone-flagged hall.

"Understand this," continues Mr. Perkinson: "If you want to hang about here looking for ghosts I can't stop you. I've lived here for three months now, and all I've seen is rats, mice, cockroaches and beetles. But have your bit of fun if you want to; I'm going to bed."

Having thus shown how completely he has failed to grasp the gravity of the situation, Mr. Perkinson lights a candle and mounts the staircase, leaving us to settle down to our vigil.

The First Alarm.

Almost immediately there comes from outside the front-door the sound of weird moans, eldritch cries and an occasional shriek. Sir George springs to his feet tense and shaken, but my nerves are stronger. "That will be Captain Featherstonehaugh, if I know anything of his habits," I remark impatiently. Sure enough, the next minute the Captain's head appears round the door. "Any ghosts about yet?" he bawls out in an offensive manner. "Come on then, ghost. Good ghost, then. I've brought a friend of yours to see you."

And with these words he ushers in a stout gentleman in



"'Any ghosts about yet?' he bawls."

a loud tweed suit whom he introduces to us as Mr. Joseph Smith the well-known medium. Mr. Smith tells us to keep a good look-out and to call him if anything happens. He then seats himself in the most comfortable chair, props his feet up on the fender, yawns and announces that conditions are now favourable for him to go into a trance. Shortly afterwards his heavy breathing and occasional loud snores tell us that he is *en rapport* with the other world.

Sir George gives a sharp rebuke to the Captain for his

levity; but he has already wandered away, and can be heard in the distance opening and shutting doors and making loud comments on the furniture. Once again we settle down to wait.

Shuffling Footsteps

Some minutes pass, and then faintly from somewhere beneath us I hear the sound of footsteps ascending—shuffling uncertain footsteps getting nearer every second. "To the cellar," I breathe, and by the light of a single candle we grope our way to the back premises. The cellar-door is open and an icy breath is blowing through it.

And the sounds show that some Thing, human or inhuman, is dragging its way up the steps.

"Who is there?" calls Sir George in quavering tones.

"I can call spirits from the vasty deep," replies a sepulchral voice.

Then—as we might have expected—Captain Featherstonehaugh emerges from the gloom, carrying a bottle of whisky under one arm and a siphon under the other. "Might as well make ourselves comfortable—what?" he says, uneasily meeting our indignant looks.

At this I move forward and snatch his burden from him. "Captain Featherstonehaugh," I cry, "this is no time for carousing. Kindly go and sit in the hall and let us have no more of this extraordinary behaviour, which has already jeopardised the success of this important and dangerous experiment."

"Oh, all right, all right," says the Captain moodily. "I only thought you looked as though you needed something to keep your courage up."

We return to the hall in indignant silence to resume our interrupted vigil. Mr. Smith is still deep in his trance, the fire is burning low, no sound is to be heard save the deep ticking of a clock in the background.

One's Blood Runs Cold

Suddenly from up above us, softly at first but rising in intensity, we hear a new sound, a sound to make the blood run cold, the choking gurgling sound of someone whose



"Some Thing, human or inhuman, is dragging its way up the steps."

throat has been cut from ear to ear. The Grey Monk of Bogge Manor is with us in the house!

Captain Featherstonehaugh brings Mr. Smith out of his trance and we urge him silently before us up the staircase, for we are all tacitly agreed that it is best for an expert to have the first chance of seeing what is before us.

At the top of the stairs a long corridor stretches away into the darkness and at the far end of it a faint flickering light can be seen approaching. Breathlessly we flatten ourselves against the wall as the light draws near enough to reveal the form of a cowled monk gliding silently down the passage. Pushed forward by Captain Featherstonehaugh and perspiring freely, Mr. Smith advances towards the apparition.

"Are you the ghost of Geoffrey de Bouillon, the Grey Monk of Bogge Manor?" he asks in shaking accents.

"No," says the apparition, "I am the ghost of Henry Perkinson, the unhappy tenant of Bogge Manor, who has been hounded to death by a party of busybodies."

Unmasked

"So, Mr. Perkinson," says Sir George sternly, "you are the ghost of Bogge Manor? Perhaps you will explain to us why you are masquerading in a monk's robe?"



"Are you the ghost of Geoffrey de Bouillon?"

And with that Mr. Perkinson for some reason or other seems to lose his self-control. He throws his candlestick to the ground, stamps on it and kicks it down the passage.

"Sir George," he cries out of the darkness, "I have worn this dressing-gown for forty years, my father wore it for twenty years before that, and this is the first time that half the neighbourhood have had to sit up to watch it coming out of the bathroom. Perhaps you would like to see my nightshirt now and tell me whether it looks like the ghost of Mary Queen of Scots?"

"And were you also making that unpleasant choking noise, Sir?" I ask severely.

"Certainly not," replies Mr. Perkinson. "If you mean that beastly noise the bath makes whenever the water runs out, I have already complained about that to Sir George's agent. I expect the waste-pipe is blocked up with beetles, the same as the rest of the house."

"Ah!" says Sir George.

An Unpleasant Epilogue

And it really seems as though our vigil is over. Mr. Perkinson asks if we would like to look under his bed to see if there are any ghosts there; but we refuse, as we already feel well satisfied with the night's work. With a word of reassurance to Mr. Perkinson—which is received somewhat ungraciously—we descend the staircase and pass out into the night, secure in the knowledge that the ghost of Bogge Manor has been laid for ever.

But the next morning I am surprised to see that there is an inaccurate and deplorably facetious account of our experiences in *The Clumphampton Mercury*. On inquiry I find that Mr. Smith, far from being an expert medium, is actually one of that paper's reporters. It is then that I realise the full folly of allowing Captain Featherstonehaugh any part in so important an investigation. H. W. M.

As Soon as Possible

A CORRESPONDENCE has recently taken place between my publishers and myself.

But not a straightforward man-to-man correspondence, like the kind between me and my butcher, or me and my Aunt Emma.

My publishers and I communicate with one another *vid* my literary agent. This helps to swell the Inland Revenue account (extra stamps), and does its bit towards the reduction of the Unemployment figures (my literary agent's office-girl), and also serves to mark the difference—which is gradually becoming less and less obvious in most other ways—between English and American methods.

DEAR MISS PIN (*writes my agent*),—Messrs. Button and Mutton write that they would be glad to know as soon as possible whether you will have a new novel ready for inclusion in their Spring List, and, if so, if you could let them have a short descriptive paragraph. They would be glad to receive this as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,
G. W. A. F. CHEESE.

To this I reply:—

DEAR MR. CHEESE,—Will you be so kind as to let Messrs. Button and Mutton know as soon as possible that I am hoping to have a novel completed for inclusion in their Spring List. It is a very intensive psychological study of HENRY VIII., the rather well-known Tudor king.

Yours sincerely,
E. PIN.

DEAR MISS PIN,—Messrs. Button and Mutton have asked me to let you know as soon as possible that, whilst they are delighted to hear that you have got a new novel for them, they are rather anxious as to your choice of subject. Practically every writer of any significance, and many of none, has quite recently published a book about HENRY VIII., and they are a little bit afraid that the Tudor vogue may be running out.

They would be glad to hear your views as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,
G. W. A. F. CHEESE.

DEAR MR. CHEESE,—Could you inform Messrs. Button and Mutton as soon as possible that I will do my best to meet their views (as soon as possible)? The trend of my new novel is so entirely psychological that I think I could substitute JONAH and the Whale for HENRY without in any way interfering with the theme.

If Messrs. Button and Mutton would let you know as soon as possible if they like the idea, would you let me hear from you as soon as possible, when I will effect the comparatively minor alterations involved as soon as possible?

Yours sincerely,
E. PIN.

Very well. Hardly have we settled Messrs. Button and Mutton, HENRY and JONAH (and the Whale) than the publishing world begins to get busy on the far side of the Atlantic.

My American publishers do not take any notice of Mr. G. W. A. F. Cheese. They go straight to the fountain-head (me):—

MY DEAR MISS PIN,—We in New York are all so happy to hear that we may hope to bring out another of your wonderful novels in the Fall. That's just the best news!

Now, I wonder if you could find a minute to have your secretary cable us the title, chapter-headings and main theme of your book, together with a quite brief outline of the plot? This will enable our boys to get right on with a big advance-advertising campaign all over this country.

I just can't tell you how very much we are all of us right here in this office looking forward to the arrival of your manuscript.

Cordially,
FRANK B. HOCK.
(*Messrs. Hock, Bassedge & Co.*)

Well, there are reasons, or anyway there's *one* reason, why I don't have my secretary do as Mr. Frank B. Hock suggests. But I convey the necessary information to him, and two days later his return cable arrives:—

Your theme absolutely O.K. by us but would suggest HENRY TUDOR sex-life somewhat overdone of late prefer alternative offered JONAH stop suggest you elaborate well-known episode with whale as can see great film possibilities stop also suggest very careful handling final catastrophe avoiding anything likely to offend humanitarian susceptibilities stop this with reference to Women's Magazine Editors in view possible serialization stop letter follows stop very cordially.—FRANK B. HOCK.

Nor does it end there.

Whilst I am already settling down—spurred on by encouraging cables—to thinking about my next novel—(*not* HENRY VIII. and not, now, JONAH and the Whale, but what about Yankee Doodle?)—the Transatlantic telegraph-lines are kept alive, the excitement grows and grows; Mr. Hock, Mr. Bassedge, Co.—"our boys," I suppose?—get more and more happy and busy and more and more cordially mine.

Mr. G. W. A. F. Cheese enters into his own when the moment comes for arranging a contract. Whether Mr. Hock, Mr. Bassedge or our boys are on the same terms of blithe intimacy with him that they are with me I do not know. Mr. Cheese has ceased—temporarily—to write to me. He is far too fully occupied with his snappy American correspondence—so different from Messrs. Button and Mutton's efforts.

The only thing is, when one comes down to actual *sales*—on either side of the Atlantic—is there so much difference in results as in methods? One of those questions that we must all answer for ourselves. As soon as possible.

E. M. D.

Old Dancing Days

AT a dance in the jolly old nineties
We galloped all over the room;
We had never heard then of a floor twelve by ten
Where we'd amble with faces of gloom.

When we sat at our dinner or supper
We tackled each excellent dish,
And didn't go puffin' around full of muffin
Or waltz 'tween the soup and the fish.

The dancing was more like a riot,
Each partner was seized in a grip
Like a wrestler's hold, for disasters untold
Was her fate if she happened to slip.

In the rollicking polkas and lancers
The timorous went to the wall,
For we dashed like expresses; 'twas rough on the dresses,
Though that didn't matter at all.

As we crashed with a joyous abandon
Into most of the couples around,
A spot of reversing set everyone cursing
And several went to the ground.

In a furious gallop to end with
And shouting for all we were worth,
With joy undiminished, the third collar finished
And shirt-front like nothing on earth,

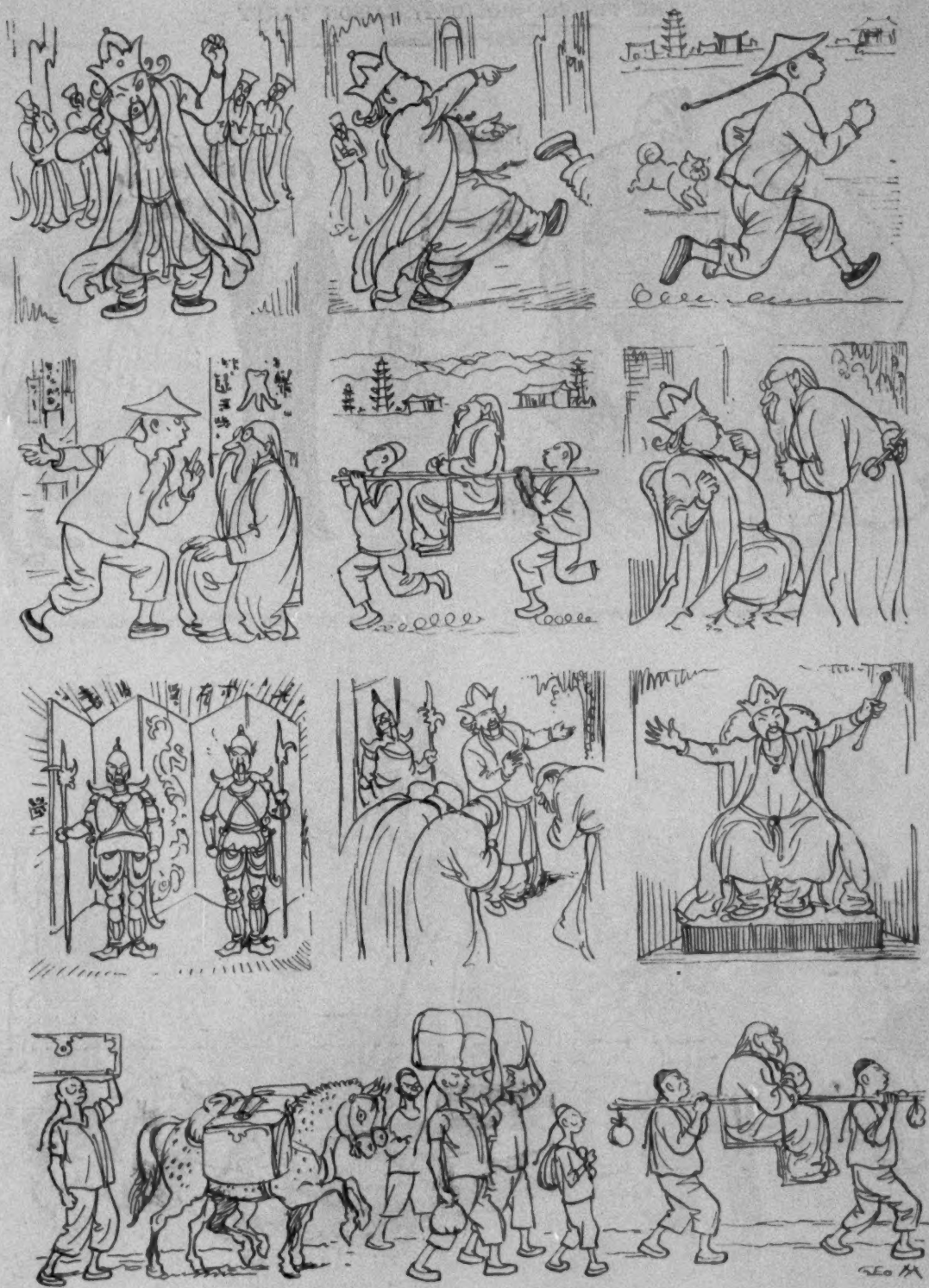
We were footsore, bedraggled and dripping,
A sight to draw tears from the gods,
Our partners were tattered, but none of that mattered,
We were happy, so what was the odds?



ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF NAUGHTINESS IN THE NINETIES.



THE SURREALIST'S NIGHTMARE.



THE DENTIST

THE FIN DE (HOLIDAY) SAISON PARTY

A HINT TO HOSTESSES



INTRODUCTIONS ARE EFFECTED WITH DIFFICULTY—



AND ARE FOLLOWED BY A CERTAIN COOLNESS—



AND LACK OF DECORUM.



EVEN REVERSIONS TO "CAVE-MAN" BEHAVIOUR ARE NOT UNKNOWN.

THE FIN DE (HOLIDAY) SAISON PARTY

A HINT TO HOSTESSES



ICES AND LEMONADE CREATE A SOMEWHAT FRIENDLIER ATMOSPHERE—

BUT WITH A SUGGESTION OF DANCING, GLOOM AGAIN DESCENDS—



AND IT IS NOT UNTIL A QUANTITY OF EXCRUCIATINGLY NOISY INSTRUMENTS ARE PRODUCED THAT THE CLOUD DISPELS AND ALL IS PEACE AND HARMONY.

THE MOVEMENT FOR MORE USEFUL CHRISTMAS PRESENTS



BAYONET-PRACTICE OUTFIT FOR LITTLE JIM



FIELD-BOOTS FOR SISTER MATILDA



FIRST-AID OUTFIT FOR NIECE SUSAN ANNE



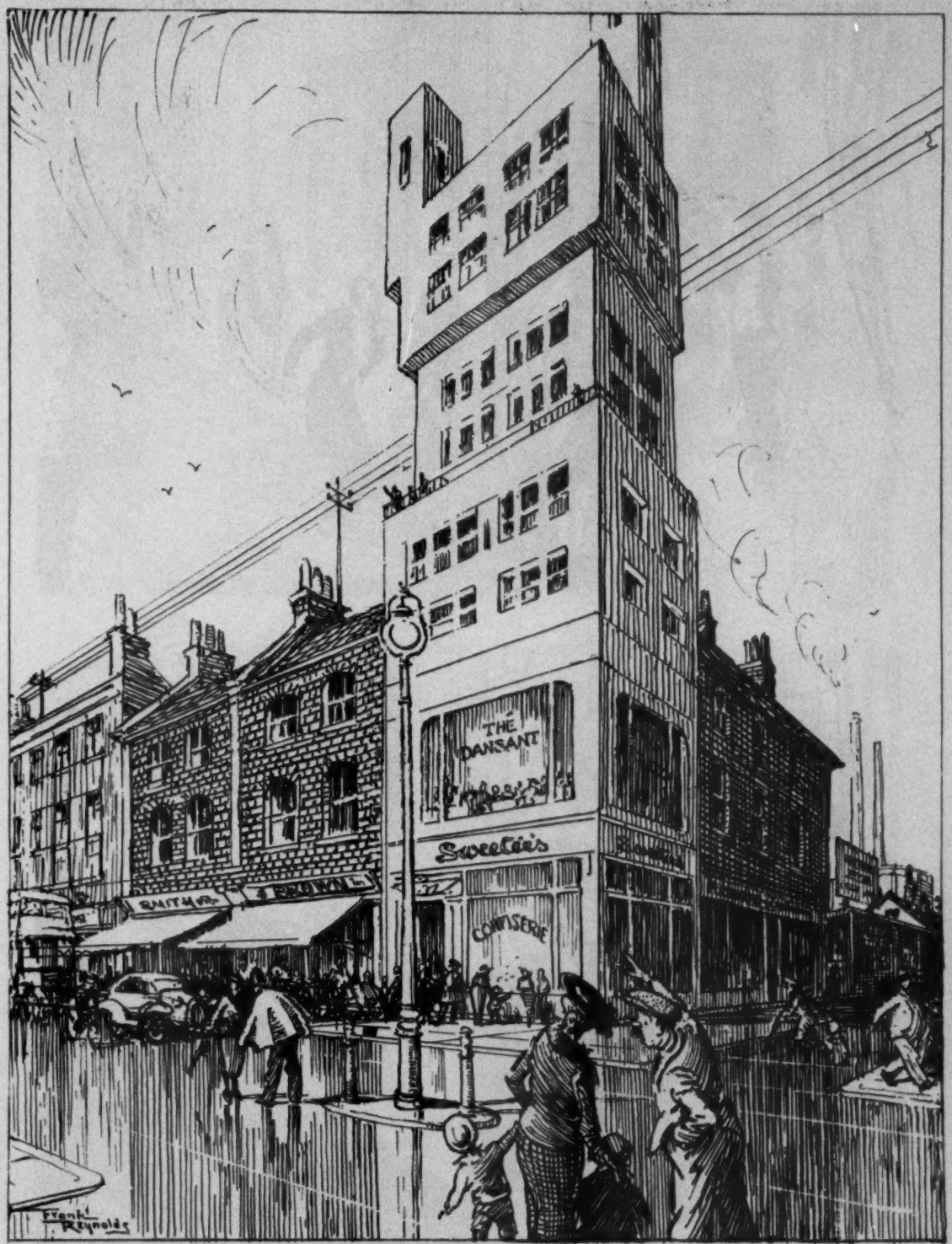
A SUB-MACHINE-GUN FOR YOUNG TOM



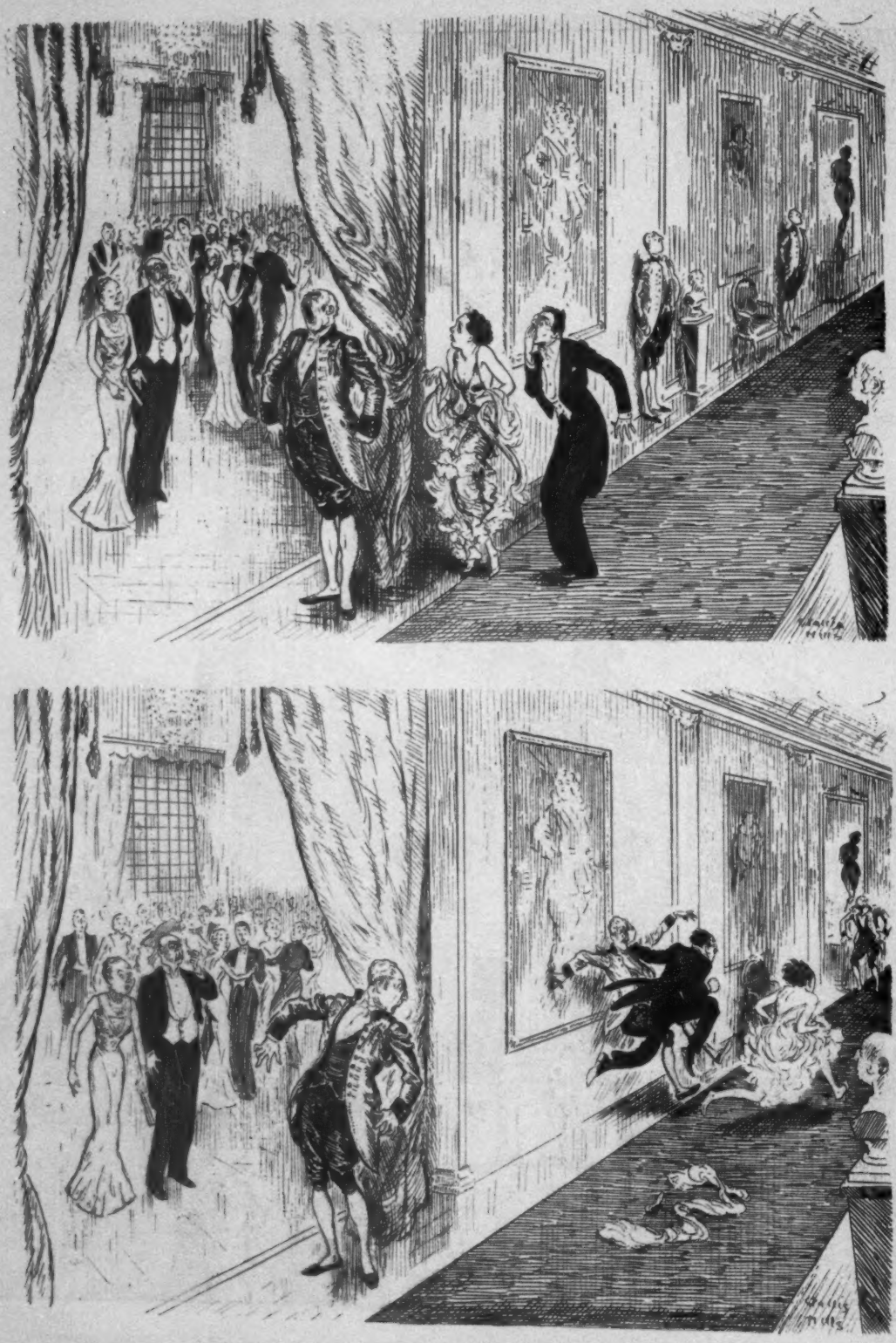
A STEEL HELMET FOR UNCLE DICK



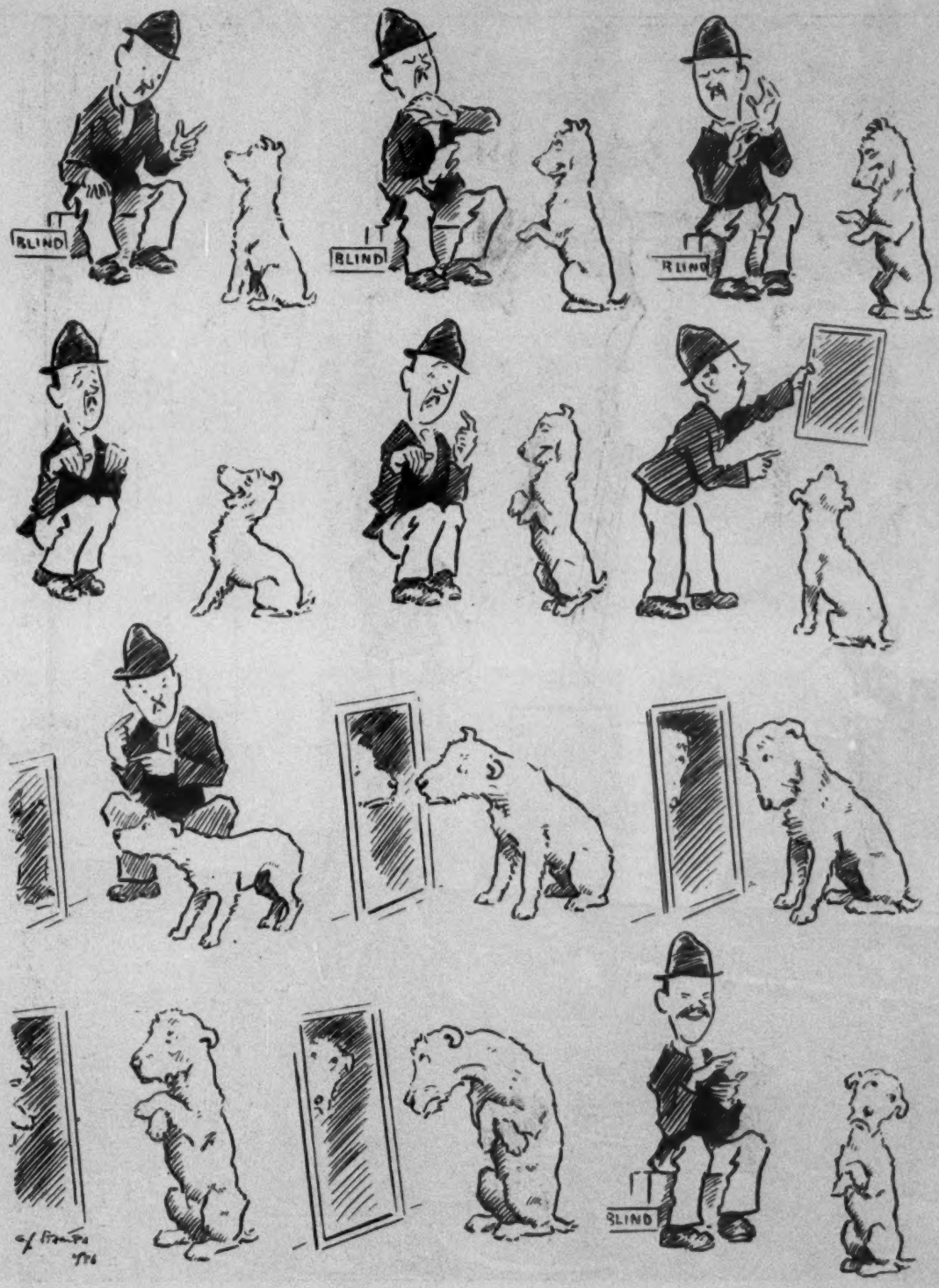
THE LATEST THING IN GAS-MASKS FOR AUNTY EILEEN



Former Resident. "STRUTH! THEY 'AVEN'T 'ALF REBUILT THE LITTLE SWEET-STUFF SHOP!"

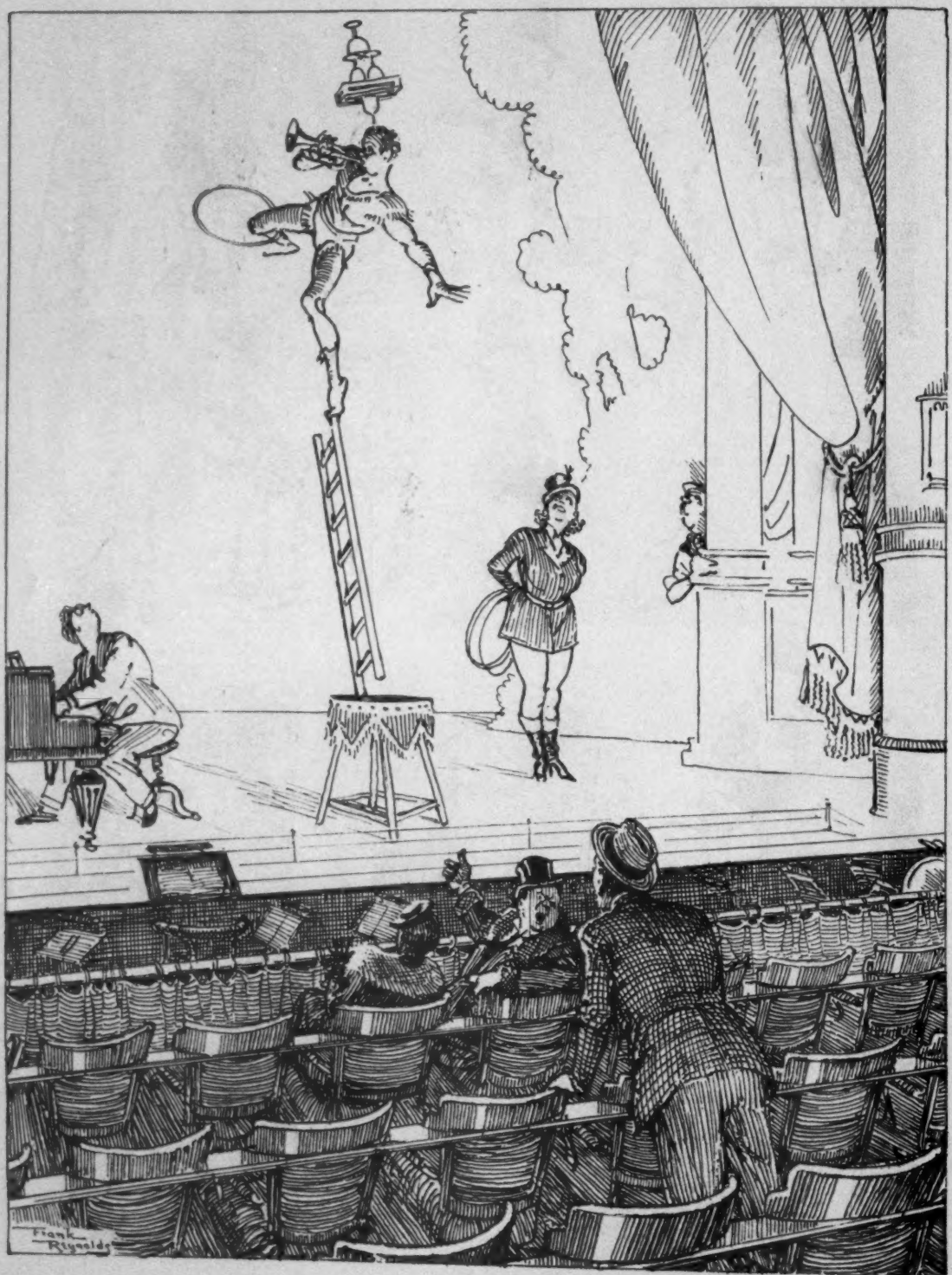


THE SHY GUESTS WHO SHIED



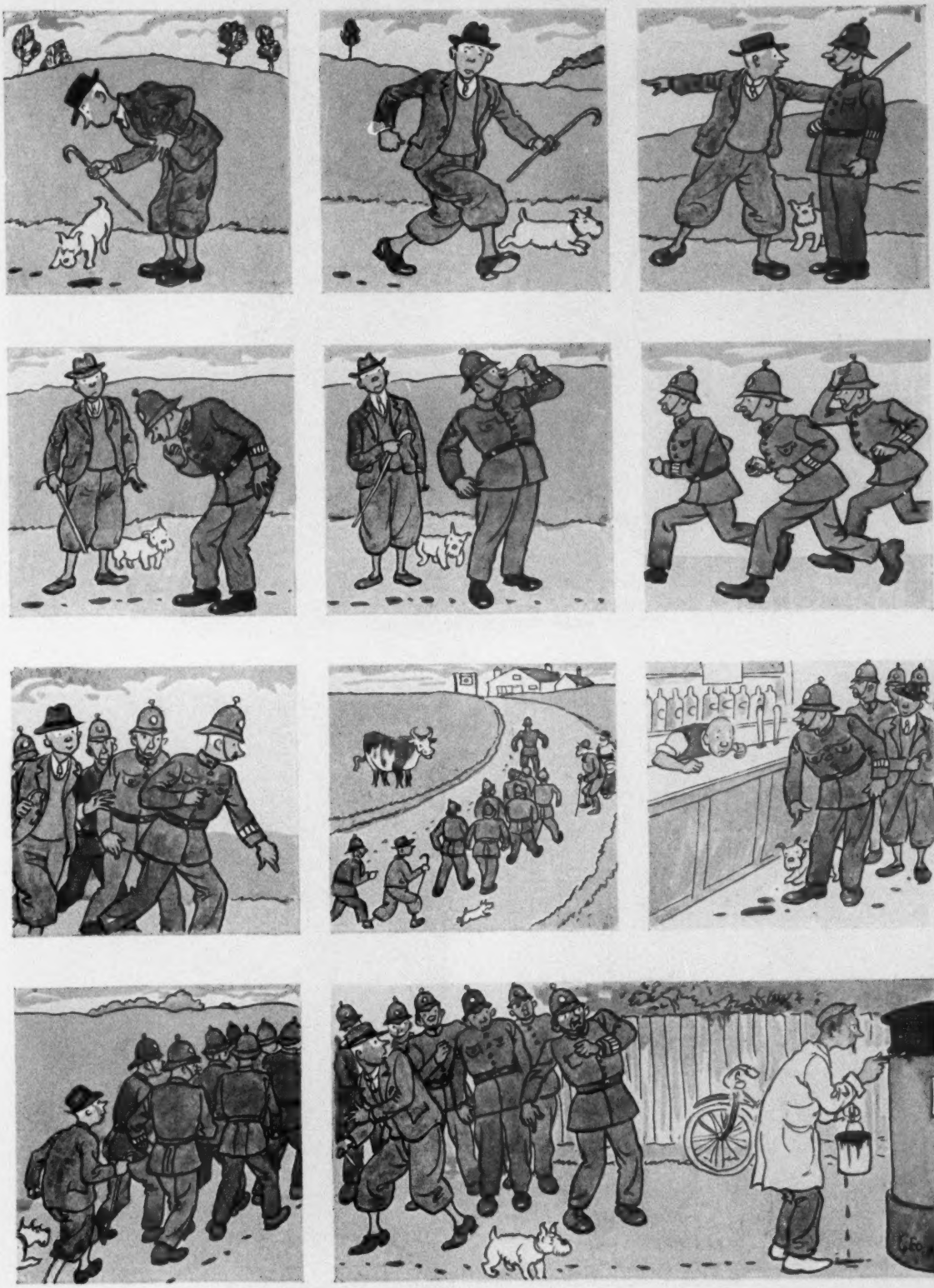
THE BLIND MAN'S DOG

A LESSON IN EXPRESSION



THE TRY-OUT

Very Hard-boiled Manager. "LEFT 'AND'S DOIN' NOWT!"



THE TRAIL OF BLOOD.

THE BOOK OF BEAUTY.



AS IT WAS IN GREAT-GRANDMAMA'S TIME. YOU WERE EITHER A BLONDE OR A BRUNETTE AND YOU LEFT IT AT THAT.



NOWADAYS, THANKS TO THE ADVANCEMENT OF CHEMICAL SCIENCE.

THE BOOK OF BEAUTY.





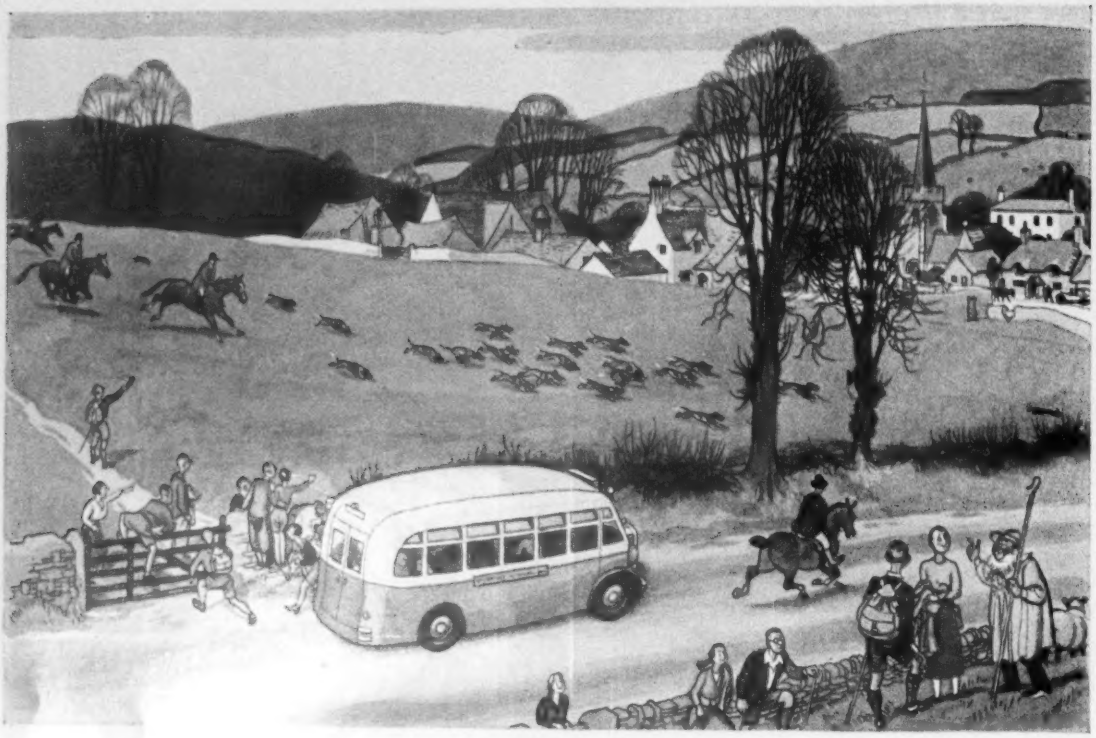
IT COULD CONTAIN CONSIDERABLY MORE VARIETY



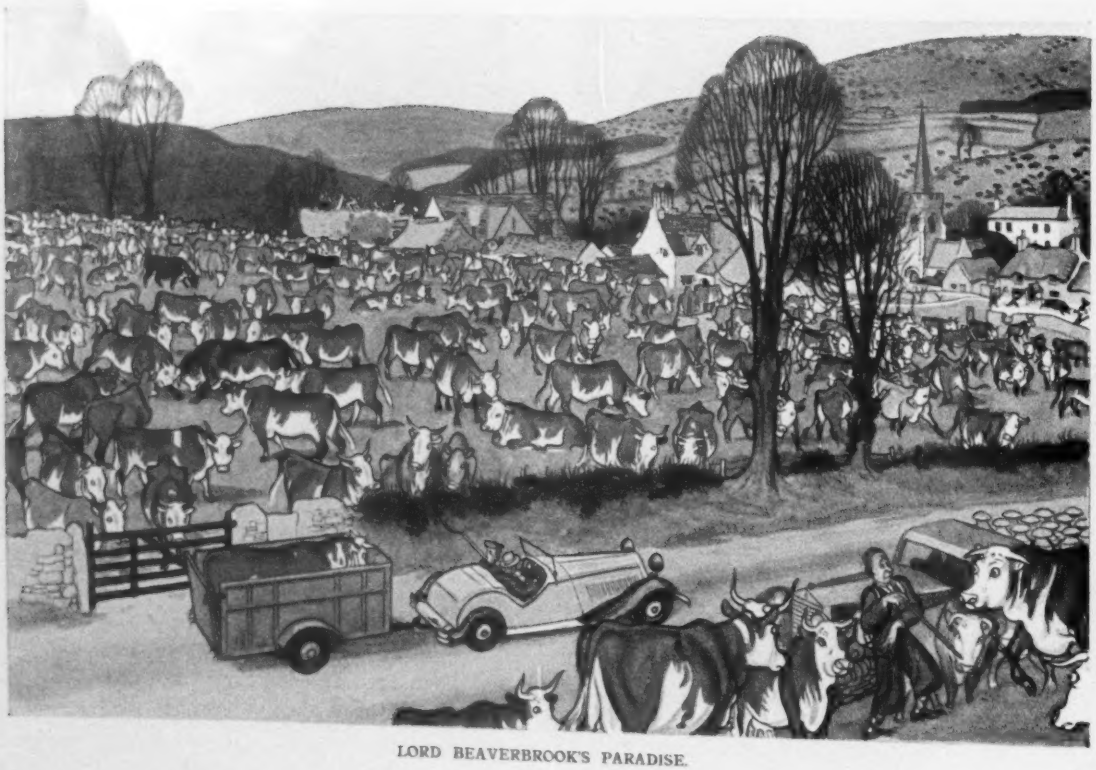


AND WHAT IS MORE, THE SAME YOUNG LADY COULD POSE FOR THE LOT.

"ENGLAND'S GREEN AND PLEASANT LAND. . . ."

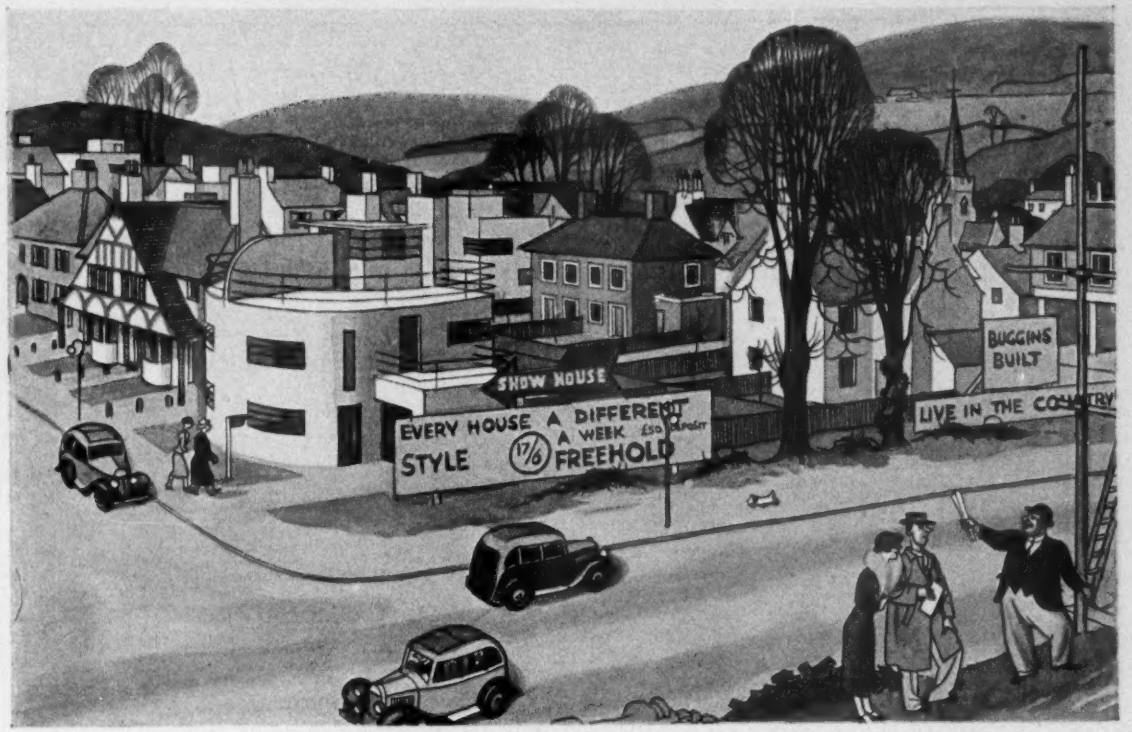


THE HIKER'S IDEAL.

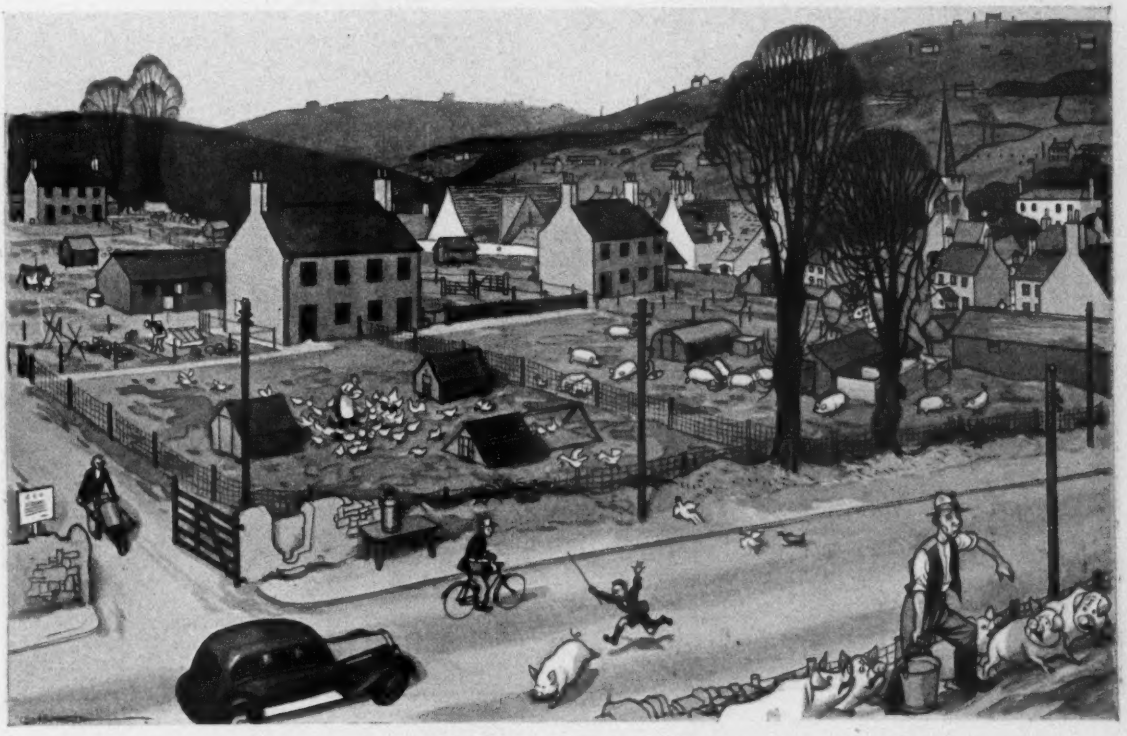


LORD BEAVERBROOK'S PARADISE.

"ENGLAND'S GREEN AND PLEASANT LAND. . . ."



THE VISION OF THE SPECULATIVE BUILDER.



THE COUNTY COUNCIL SCHEME.

THE BROADCAST THAT DIDN'T QUITE COME OFF.



THE BROADCAST THAT DIDN'T QUITE COME OFF.





TRUTH IN ADVERTISING.

THE ADVERTISEMENT SAID "A CHILD COULD USE IT."

THE ACTOR WHO GOT INTO A RUT



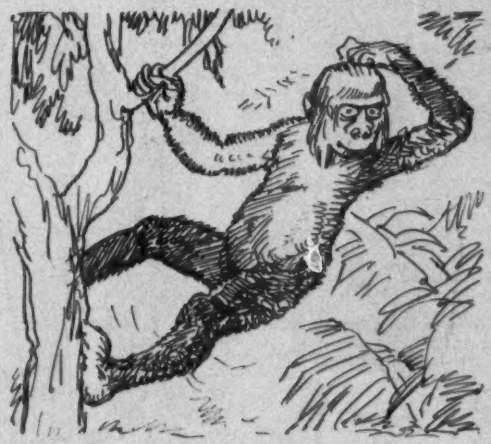
HE MADE SUCH A SUCCESS AS THE HIND-LEGS OF A HORSE—



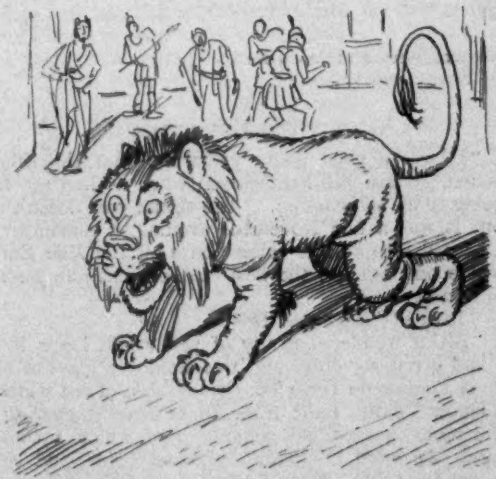
THAT HE WAS EVER AFTERWARDS—



IN CONSTANT DEMAND—



FOR THE IMPERSONATION—



OF ANIMALS—



WHILE ALL THE TIME HIS REAL AMBITION WAS TO DO THIS KIND OF THING.

Working in the Dark

(The story of a true Englishman and how he held the whole alphabet at bay)

"DID you ever hear how I once let down the British Empire?" asked Big Bill Strangerson with a yawn.

We were discussing a bottle of exquisite pimento wine in Guffy Thompson's rooms at the time (a grateful President of Guadeloupe had bestowed it upon him at the time of the Ratterson business), and the talk had turned naturally upon the queer places we had seen and the queerer things some of us had done in remote outposts of the Empire.

"You're joking of course," observed Fletcher of Barts, deftly twisting his long black cigar (Collinsons of the Haymarket used to get them over specially for him from Cochin-China) in those strong supple fingers of his that could isolate a man's lobelium or trisect a malignant clavicle as easily as you or I could saw a plank in half.

"I'm perfectly serious," replied Strangerson quietly (he was not called "Big Bill" for nothing).

There was a moment of absolute silence. To say that we were shocked at hearing such a confession from a man with Strangerson's record gives no inkling of the electric atmosphere that seemed suddenly to fill the room. We were all old friends of Bill's and we should hardly have been human had we not been profoundly moved. Sir Egerton Crumb (he refused the K.C.B. offered him for his share in the Bramahputra affair) paused with a match halfway to his unlighted cigarette; Davies, the eminent K.C., began feverishly to polish his spectacles, and even General Post, who had faced CETEWAYO'S *impis* without a tremor, raised his great tangled eyebrows for a moment.

"You'll have to explain yourself, old chap," he said almost silently. "We can't let it rest at that, you know"—and I think we all felt—I know I did—that he was only putting into words what was already in the mind of each one of us.

Bill looked slowly round at our intent faces with an expression I couldn't fathom—not then, anyhow. It was not quite a grin and yet it was not quite anything else. Have you ever seen the look on the face of an Annamite *klong* priest when he is just about to offer himself to Buthnu? Well, it was that sort of look.

"I'd better tell you the whole story," he said.



"WE WERE DISCUSSING A BOTTLE OF EXQUISITE PIMENTO WINE."

THE ENCOUNTER

"It was a good many years ago that the thing happened," began Bill Strangerson when he had got his pipe going to his satisfaction. "The actual year doesn't matter, but it was a fine November evening, I remember, when I turned into a little coffee-house off the Mile End Road where one can get the best *champignons aux fines herbes* in London——"

"Josef's?" suggested Davies.

"Ah! I wondered if any of you would know it. Well, I had given my order and was sipping a glass of Château de la Pomme de Terre '06, that noblest of red wines, when a fellow I didn't know from Adam came staggering across the room, gasped out something of which I could only catch the word 'Bokhara' repeated twice, and collapsed across the table. When I tried to lift him up I saw to my horror that a great crimson stain was spreading slowly

over the cloth. It was obvious that it was all up with the poor chap.

"Well, I've had a little experience of this sort of affair, as you know, and I don't suppose much more than an hour-and-a-quarter had passed before I was down at Croydon chartering a plane for Bokhara. I had left the Mile End Road by tram, changed my hat, coat and beard



"A FELLOW I DIDN'T KNOW CAME STAGGERING ACROSS THE ROOM."

in a taxi between Ludgate Circus and Euston, taken a roundabout route by train and completed my journey from Kingston to the aerodrome on a borrowed bicycle, so I had good hopes that even if I had been watched leaving Josef's I should have thrown my pursuers off the trail. I didn't know then, you see, what I was up against."

BOKHARA

Strangerson paused to relight his immense Siberian *narghile*.

"Any of you fellows know Bokhara?" he asked casually.

"I was out there for a few days in 'nineteen," said Thompson. "For the flamingo-shooting."

There was a shout of laughter.

"There aren't any flamingoes in Bokhara, my dear chap," said the General as soon as he could speak.

"The flamingo-shooting was a blind," said Thompson quietly. "I was there on pretty serious business really—something to do with the Russian scare. You see, I reasoned that Mushiloff and his thugs would never give a second thought to a man who was fool enough to go to Bokhara after flamingo. I was right too as it happened."

"You probably know Yussof's then?" Bill asked.

Thompson nodded. "The best goat's-liver in Turkestan," he agreed.

"Well, I went along there the moment I landed. It's a dirty little wine-shop in a back-street behind the market—as good a place to get your throat cut as you could want—and I guessed I was as likely to find out what the game was there as anywhere. There were a couple of rough-looking Armenians at a table near mine who aroused my suspicions from the first. Sure enough after a while I heard one of them say to the other, 'Y bersovak na rumba?' ('At half-past nine, then?') I pulled out my gold repeater (a memento from the President of a small South American republic for whom I once did some slight service) and saw that I had less than two hours in which to act. Next moment I felt a sickening blow on the back of my head and knew no more. . . ."

In the silence that followed Strangerson slowly filled and lit his pipe.

"When I came to my senses," he went on as soon as his *narghile* was going to his satisfaction, "I found myself lying on a heap of garbage in a narrow alley being worried almost to death by hyænas. I drove the animals off and took stock of my position. My papers, including the cloakroom ticket for my hat at Josef's and an important letter from a stockbroker, were untouched, but my watch was gone. It was obvious that this business was a good deal more serious than I had expected."

He lit another pipe.

"Clearly the next thing to do was to decide what to do next. Suddenly I remembered that queer little dance-hall place—Maraschino's, isn't it?" . . .

"The best nautch-girls in the Middle East," murmured the General dreamily.

". . . and it came to me in a flash that that must be the place of the rendezvous at half-past nine. Rapidly hooking on a large red beard and wrapping a bournous round my shoulders, I made my way to the dingy building, slipped past the gigantic Persian doorkeeper and walked boldly into the *dogri* or hall. There I had a bit of a shock. In my trade you have to learn to conceal your emotions, but I confess I nearly betrayed myself by a start of surprise when the first person my eyes rested on was ——, who had been a colleague of mine in the old Secret Service days. I can't tell you his name——"

"No. 4?" suggested Fletcher noiselessly. (He had been in the game himself until one of the Mad Wallah's elephants knelt on his head at Bolapore in '96 and forced him to settle down to surgery. Had the injury proved fatal Mysore might have been lost to the Empire—but that is another story.)

Bill struck a match.

"We will call him K if you don't mind. I mustn't



"I FOUND MYSELF LYING ON A HEAP OF GARBAGE."

mention even his number. Well, there was K sitting on a couch with a beautiful Circassian girl drinking *muk*; it was vital that I should let him know immediately who I was and how matters stood without betraying either myself or him to the enemy. Quick as thought I pushed over, as if by accident, a huge statue of Vishnu on to a group of villainous-looking Kurds, and under cover of the resulting confusion leaned over and whispered in K's ear, 'It is to be at half-past nine.'

"'Hop it, Strangerson,' he said.

"Baffled by his demeanour, I hurriedly wrote a shorthand account of the affair at Josef's on a palm-leaf and passed it over to him on the pretence of offering a match.

"'Go to hell,' he said; 'I'm on holiday.'

"At my wits' end, I seized a teaspoon and rapped out a description in Morse of the assault at Yussof's. As the tale proceeded I saw a look of sudden resolution pass over his face. It was clear that he had decided to trust me. He bent towards his beautiful companion.

"'Tamara,' he said gently, 'one of your shoulder-straps is showing.'

"When the girl had retired in confusion and we were alone, K began to speak in crisp concise undertones. 'You must go,' he said rapidly, 'to a place called Bhosh, a hundred and-forty miles south-east-by-east from here, and ask for a man named Ghob. If he is not there, wait. If he fails to appear within ten days of your arrival, act on your own initiative. But you must start to-night.'

"I looked up and saw that the villainous-looking Kurds were making their way towards our table.

"'I will go at once,' I said."

South-East-by-East to Bhosh

"I will not weary you with an account of my journey from Bokhara. Suffice it to say that, though mounted on an excellent camel, it was nearly a week before I caught sight of the huddle of low stone huts which constitute the village of Bhosh, so many were the perils and difficulties I encountered on the way. Tired and hungry, I crawled into the nearest hut and found myself, so soon as my eyes became accustomed to the gloom, in a chamber some ten feet square with a ceiling not more than four feet from the ground. At the far end sat an old man milking a goat.

"'Greetings!' I said, addressing him in Tamil. 'I seek one styling himself Ghob.'

"'He is not here,' answered the old man in fluent Pushtu.



"Be off, or I'll set the goat on you!"

"'After how many revolutions of the sun do you look to see him return?'

"'We in Bhosh know of no such person,' he returned.

"'Come!' I said sternly. 'Are you not Ghob yourself?'

"A most extraordinary change seemed to come over the old man.

"'Be off, you English dog,' he cried wildly, waving his arms, 'or I'll set the goat on you!'

"I have never, as you know, been the man to submit readily to insult, and at his words I sprang to my feet in momentary forgetfulness of my surroundings. I felt a dull blow on the top of my head and knew no more. . . .

"When I came to my senses and found myself stretched on the floor of the hut, alone save for the goat, I began to take stock of my position. It was not a pleasant one. If it was true, as the old man had said, that there was no Ghob in Bhosh, why had K sent me out here? Surely not merely to get rid of me? Or—wait a minute. Was it not possible that the man I had spoken with at Maraschino's was not K at all but one of the gang cleverly made up to resemble him? Yes, yes, that must be it. The more I thought over the curious behaviour of the man I had thought to be K the more convinced I became that he was not K but an impostor, whom we will call Z. It had been Z's job to get me away from Bokhara. But in that case why send me here? Why not back to England? And then in a flash I saw it all. Not only was Z an impostor, *the man in Josef's was in it too.* He (W, let us say) had played his part well. He knew that, with my training, it was only necessary for me to hear the word 'Bokhara' from the lips of a dying man to be off for the East at once. It was easy now, looking back, to realise that the stain on the tablecloth was not blood but claret from my glass, upset deliberately to deceive me. From first to last the operations of the gang had been directed towards the sole purpose of getting me out of England and keeping me out, while they carried through their devilish scheme, whatever it might be. And I had been fooled—fooled to the top of my bent. With a strangled oath I beat my fists impotently against the ground. Then, realising that there was not a moment to be lost, sprang madly to my feet—and knew no more.



"One of the waiters immediately stepped forward."

The Reckoning

"A fortnight later I was in London, making my way hot-foot to Josef's, which must obviously be the starting-point of my investigations. There I assembled Josef himself, the four waiters, the chef, two under-chefs, three scullery-boys and a doorman.

"'Is there somewhere,' I asked, 'where we can be alone?'

"Josef led us down to the boiler-house and shut the door.

"'You may speak quite freely here, Monsieur,' he said.

"Briefly I described what had occurred on my last visit to the restaurant. 'Do any of you,' I asked, 'know anything of the man who collapsed across my table?'

"One of the waiters immediately stepped forward.

"'He is here to-night, Monsieur,' he said. 'At Table No. 4.'"

Strangerson paused uncertainly for a moment, and Fletcher looked up at him.

"That was an indiscretion, Bill," he said quietly. "Call it Table B."

"We're all friends here," put in Sir Egerton. "Go on, Bill."

"Well, as you can imagine, I was at the door the instant I heard that this man—W—was in the place. 'Not a word of this to anyone!' I cautioned them and leapt up the stairs.

"The waiter was perfectly correct. There in an alcove sat the man I had come to hate above all other men in the world. I was on fire with excitement but my mind was perfectly calm. I decided to play upon him the trick he had played upon me; to see whether, by using the element of surprise, I could force an admission from his lips.



"I . . . KNEW NO MORE."

"In three strides I was across the room.

"'Bokhara!' I cried, and swept his wineglass to the floor.

"Next instant I felt a sickening blow on my nose and knew no more. . . ."

"And that," said Bill Strangerson slowly, lighting pipe after pipe, "is really the end of my story. I never saw Z or W or the old man with the goat again."

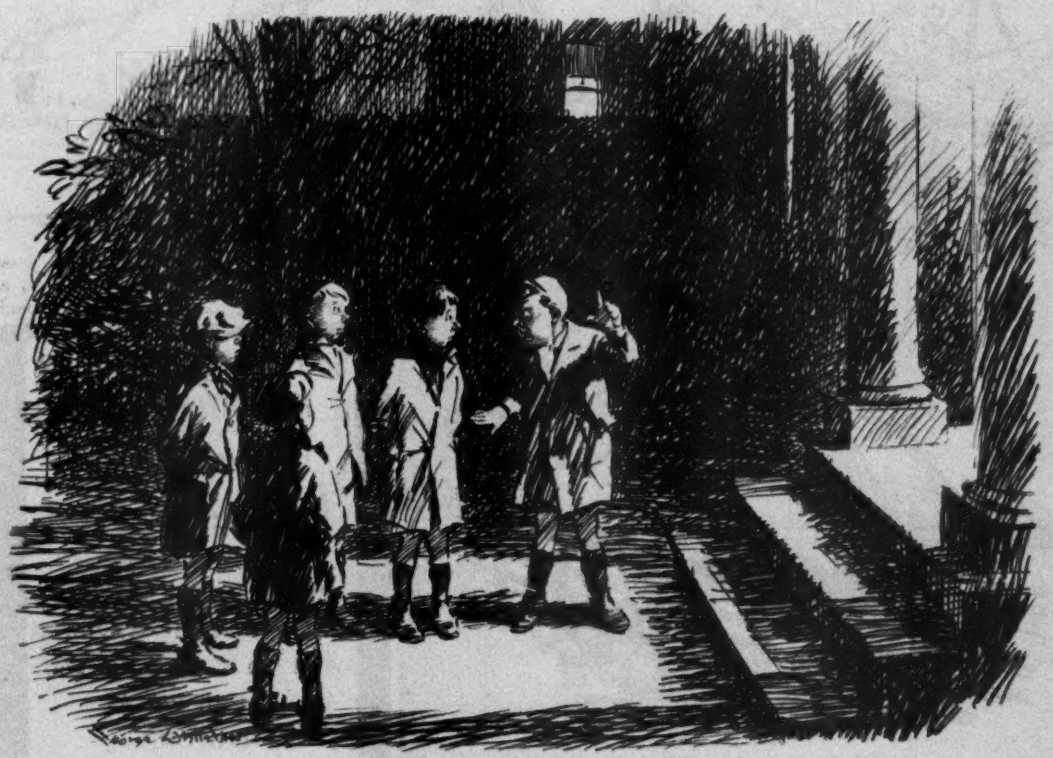
There was a long silence.

"But the Empire," said General Post at last. "How exactly did you let the Empire down?"

Bill knocked his pipe out against the fender.

"Oh, that," he said—"that's another story."

We knocked him out against the mantelpiece. H. F. E.



"NOW, MIND YER TEMPO, ALF!"

THE SAVED FIFTEEN MINUTES—



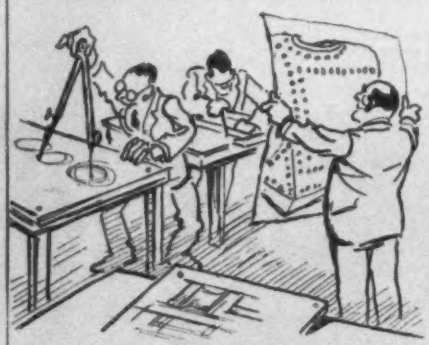
"GENTLEMEN, OUR CLIENTS OF THE 'BIG BUSINESS SPECIAL' ARE CLAMOURING FOR AN EVEN FASTER SERVICE TO THE NORTH; SO, WHATEVER THE EXPENSE IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT WE BUILD SPEEDIER LOCOMOTIVES."



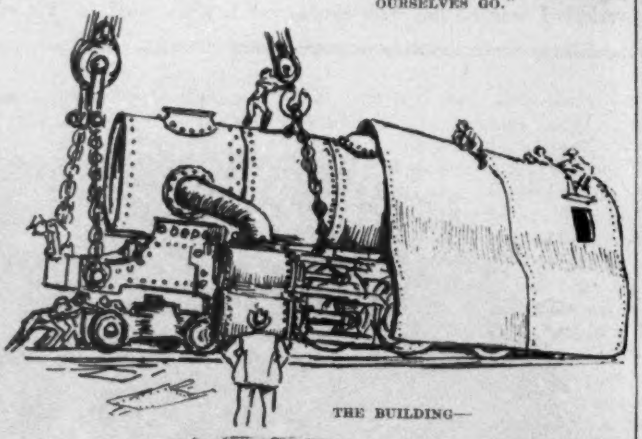
"OH, CHIEF MECHANICAL ENGINEER, WE WANT YOU TO DESIGN A LOCOMOTIVE, REGARDLESS OF COST, THAT WILL GET THE 'BIG BUSINESS SPECIAL' IN AT LEAST FIFTEEN MINUTES EARLIER."



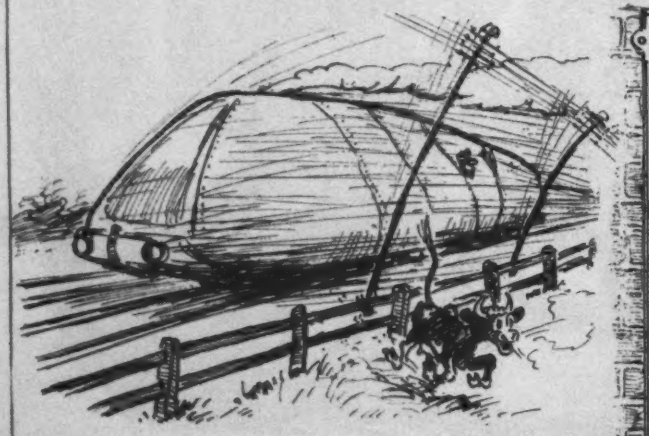
"A NEW PASSENGER ENGINE, BOYS, TO BE THE FASTEST EVER. PRICE NO OBJECT, SO WE'LL LET OURSELVES GO."



THE DESIGNING—



THE BUILDING—



AND THE TRIAL OF THE NEW LOCOMOTIVE.

SOUTH & NORTH RAILWAY
IMPORTANT NOTICE

COMMENCING ON
MONDAY NOV 2ND 1936
THE 8·0 A.M.
"BIG BUSINESS SPECIAL"
WILL ARRIVE AT NORTH STATION
AT 12·0 MID-DAY INSTEAD
OF 12·15 PM AS
HITHERTOFORE.

FELIX HUSTLE
GENERAL MANAGER.
LONDON·W.2.

OR WHAT OUR RAILWAY'S HAVE TO PUT UP WITH



"I SUPPOSE YOU KNOW THAT THIS TRAIN GETS IN AT TWELVE O'CLOCK NOW—STARTING TO-DAY?"

"MY GOODNESS! SHE'S TRAVELLING."
"YES, THE GUARD TOLD ME A SHORT TIME AGO SHE'S DOING ONE-HUNDRED-AND-EIGHTY-TWO."

"BANG ON THE NEW TIME. THAT EXTRA QUARTER OF AN HOUR IS GOING TO BE ENORMOUSLY USEFUL TO BUSY PEOPLE."

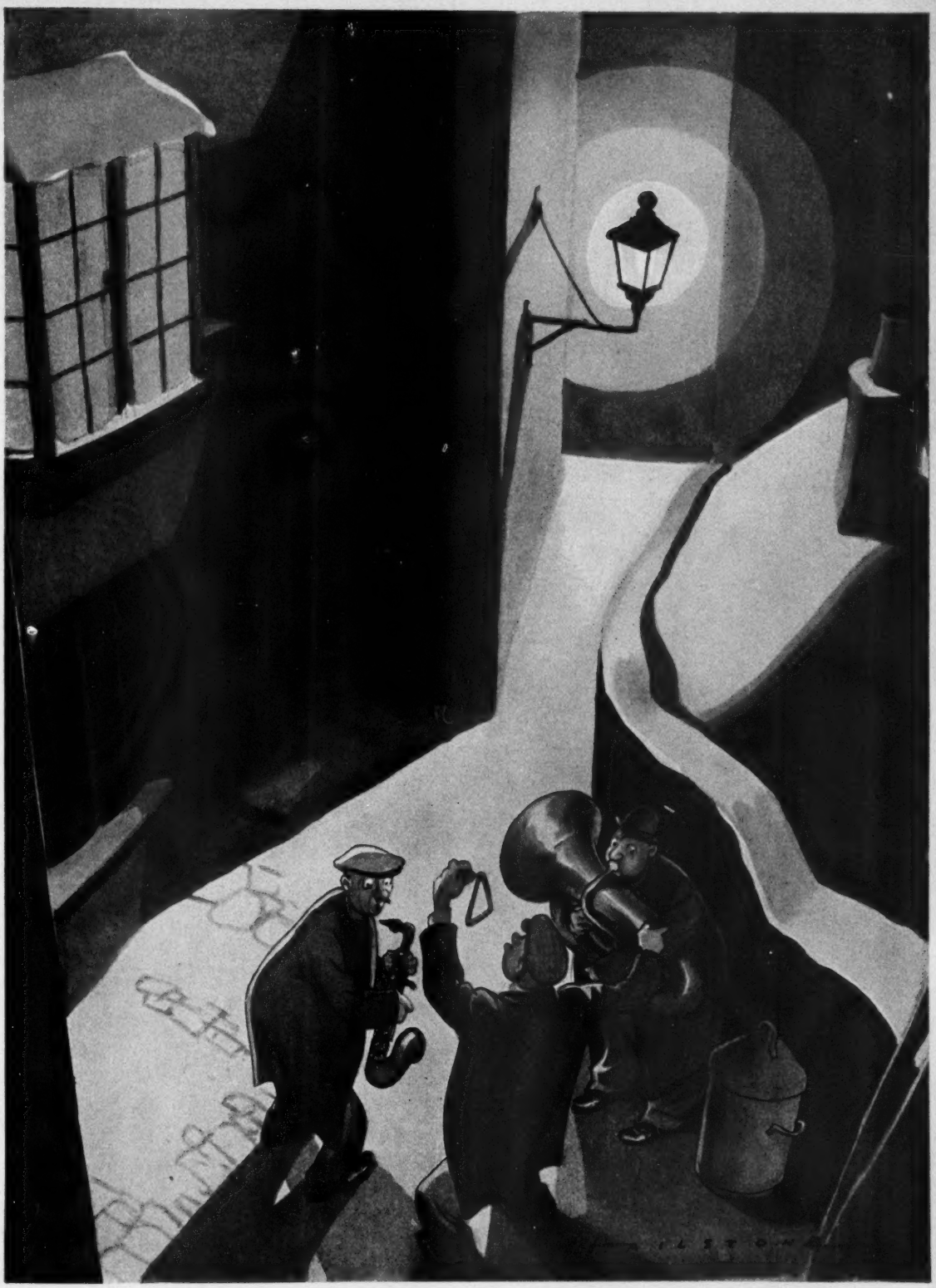
"I THINK SO—DON'T YOU?"

"WELL, WHAT IS IT?"

"GOOD MORNING, OLD MAN. YES, RATHER, THE SAME TRAIN NEXT THURSDAY."



"ANYWAY, THAT MAKES IT ALL QUITE CLEAR—IT MUST HAVE BEEN THE HÔTEL MAGNIFIQUE AT BRIGHTON THAT THE SMITHS ADVISED FOR CHRISTMAS, AND THIS ONE FOR AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER."



"'ERE A BIT MORE PIANOISSIMO ON THAT BLOOMIN' TRIANGLE, BERT; WE DON'T WANT TO FRIGHTEN 'EM!"

THE PROGRESS OF CHIVALRY.



1886



1936

SINGULAR PHENOMENON IN THE HUNTING-FIELD



WHY IS IT THE JOY OF FOLLOWING HOUNDS



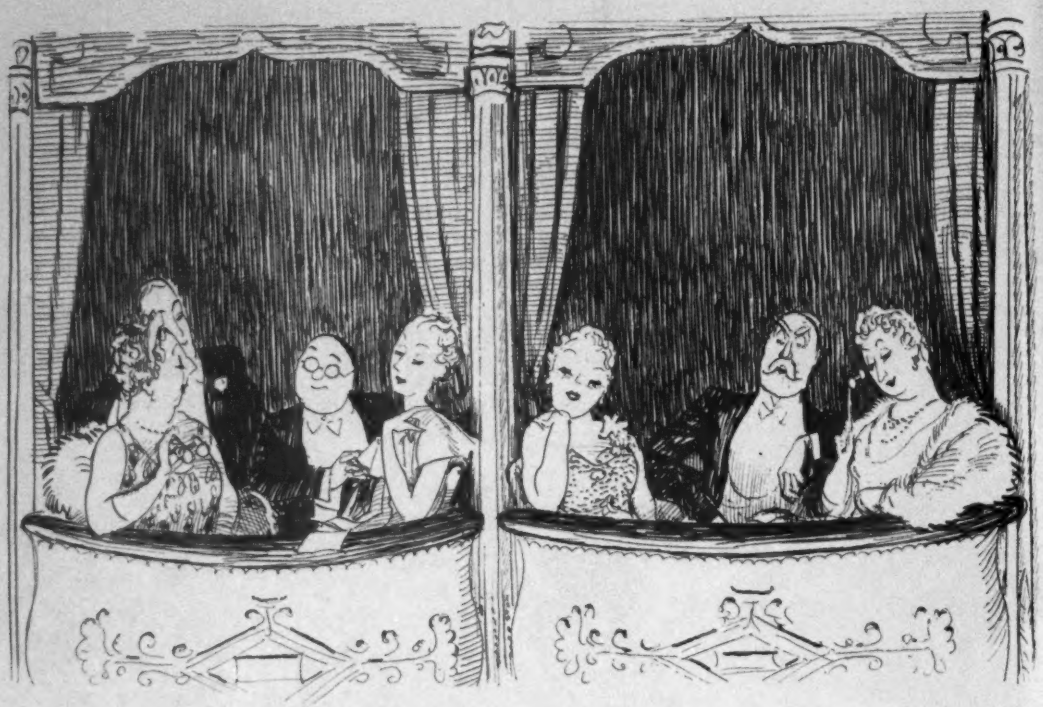
SEEMS TO VARY



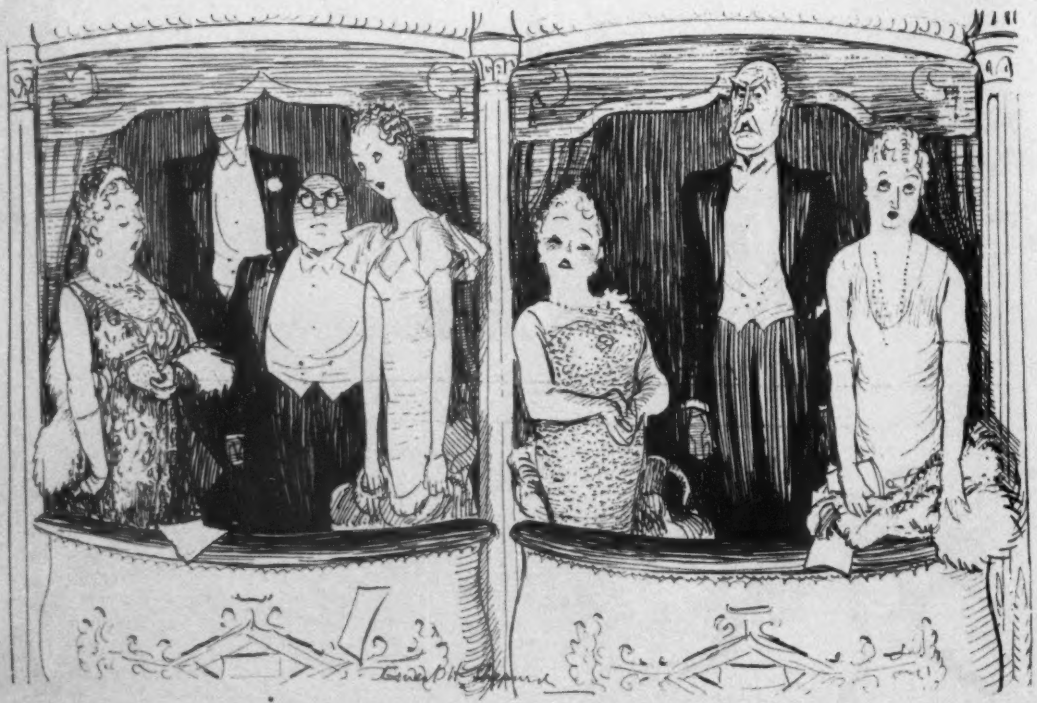
IN INVERSE PROPORTION



TO THE FINANCIAL STATUS OF THE PARTICIPANT IN THE HUNT?



BOXES ALWAYS GIVE YOU SUCH AN AIR OF DIGNITY AND POISE—



UNTIL YOU STAND UP FOR "GOD SAVE THE KING."



"CAN I GET UP NOW, MUMMY? IT 'S SO *TIRING* RESTING."

The Hunt is Over

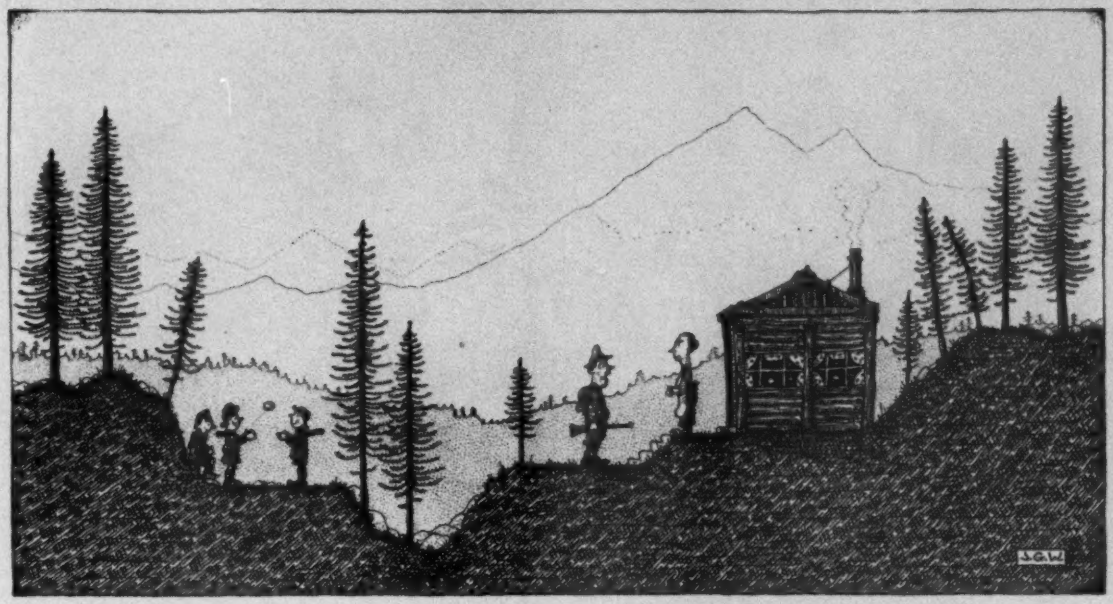
FROM the sweep of the Down they have gone,
Not an echo remains,
Not a trace to be seen
Save where the well-bred neat little hoofs
Have trodden the velvet turf, and there
A fence smashed in by a clumsy horse
Or a rider who paused, lost his nerve
And failed to give the encouraging touch of his heel
That had carried them clear.
Raise your head, old fellow, and snuff the breeze!
Which way have they gone?
Do your sharp ears, pricked to the lift of the hills,
Catch the sound of the distant horn?
"Gone away, gone away, gone awa-ay!"
But the silence reigns supreme,
Only the weary breath of the wind
Sighs over the slope and goes softly on.
And the dusk is stealing down. Turn your head for home—
One more gallop while yet we can see the way;
Thunder over the track as old as the Downs themselves
As the light fades from the clouds.

It was dusk on the hill, in the valley the dark has come—
Some thing of the night moves swift in the rustling leaves.
Steady! no need to jump yards to one side
For a furry thing that a touch of your foot would kill.
Deep in the wood a rabbit cries
At the grip of the merciless steel, while over the shadowy trees
The quiet line of the hills lies across the darkening sky.
Your feet touch on the road. Trot on.
What a noise it makes, wounding the peace of the night!
You tread on a flint and the crackling sparks fly.
Ahead shine the lights of home; in their welcoming beams
Your breath rises misty white on the frosty air.
Stand, slither down—a pat, and they lead you away—
Me for the fire and you for the fragrant hay.
Good-night, old fellow; good huntin' to your dreams;
Another day we'll not lose hounds.

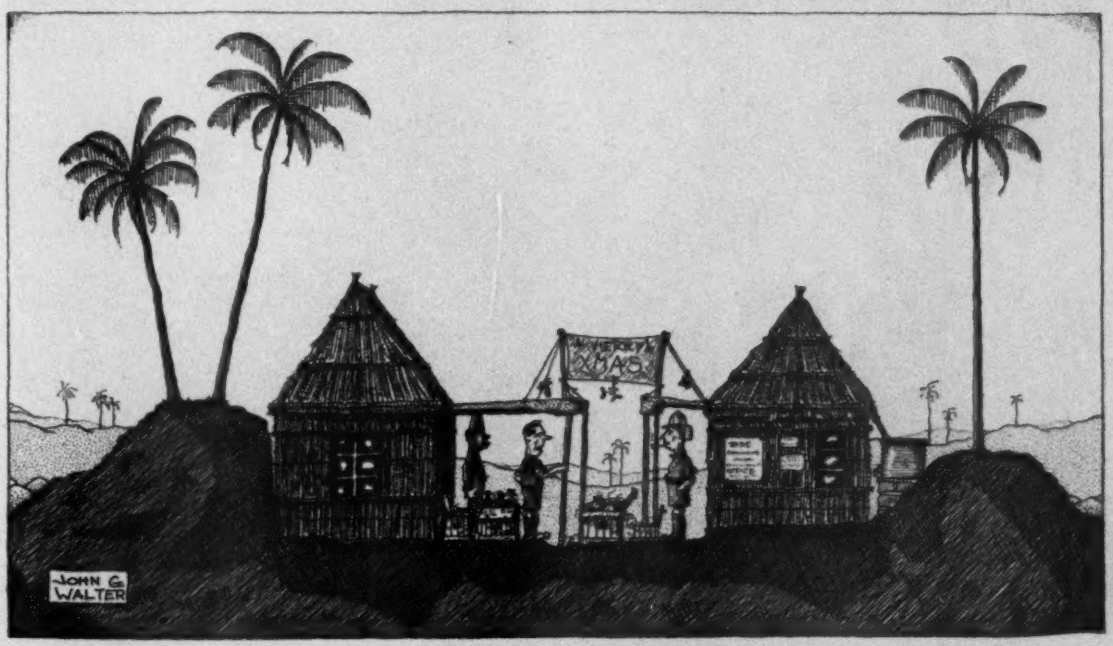


THE ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY ACQUIRES A NEW SPECIMEN

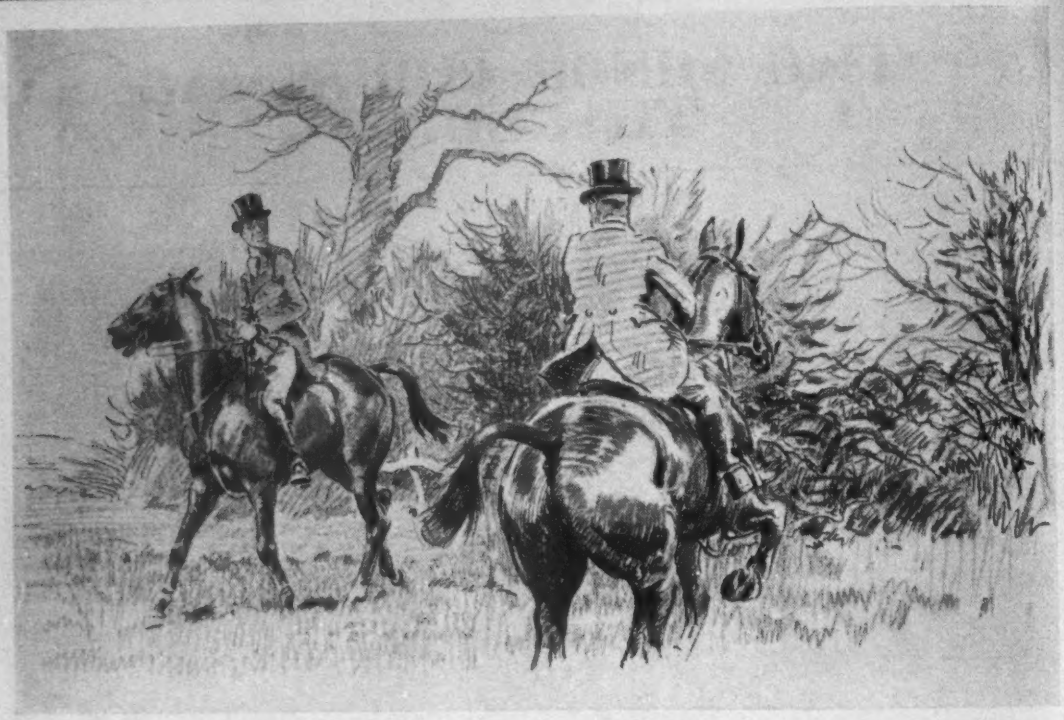
TWO MINOR CHRISTMAS TRAGEDIES



"THE CHILDREN WILL JUST HAVE TO BE CONTENT WITH MY DRESSING UP AS SANTA CLAUS, ELSIE. I COULDN'T CATCH A SINGLE REINDEER."



"BY GAD, MAJOR! IT'S A BIT THICK, THEY'VE FORGOTTEN TO SEND US ANY CRACKERS."



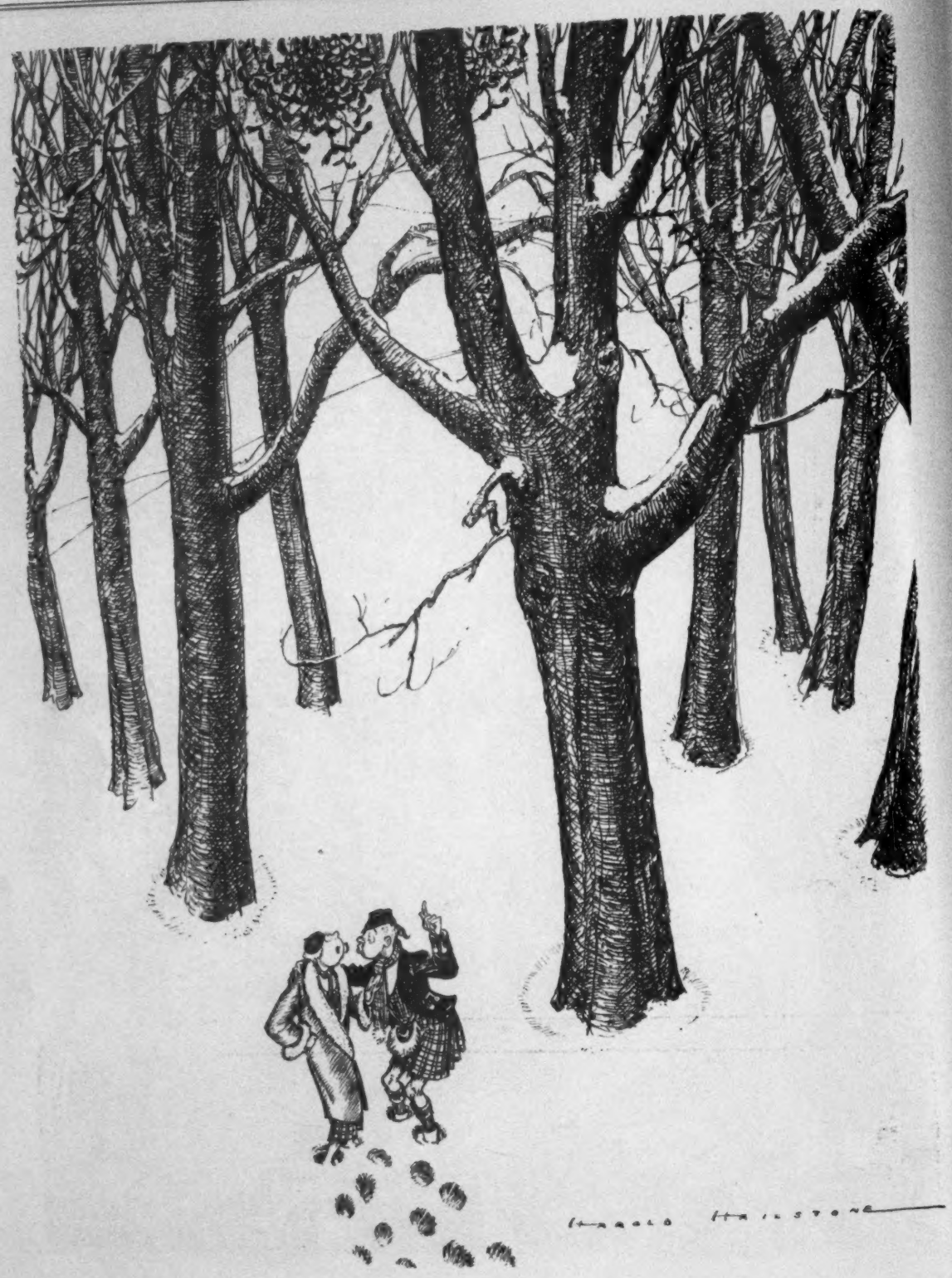
"You can't get over there, General. There's a perfect grave of a drop the other side."
"Oh, can't I?"



Voice from the grave. "Go home and powder yer nose!"



"YOU MIGHT JUST HAVE ANOTHER LOOK, WILL YOU, NURSE? I MOST DISTINCTLY MENTIONED A BAG OF ORANGES IN MY LETTER TO FATHER CHRISTMAS."



"BUT, ANGUS DEAR, ARE YE QUITE SURE YON'S REAL MISTLETOE?"



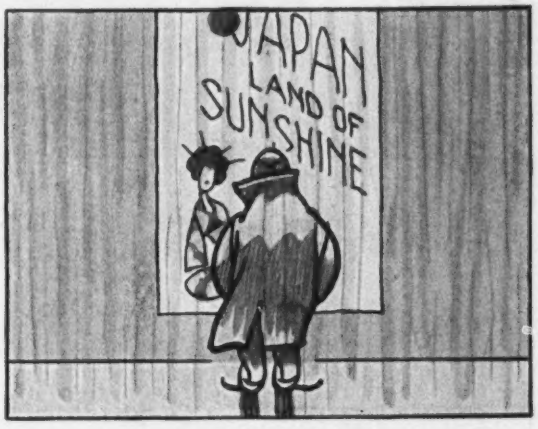
YES, IT'S CERTAINLY HARD TO BE STUCK IN LONDON WISHING YOU WERE IN MONTE CARLO—



BUT IT WOULD BE WORSE TO BE STUCK IN MONTE CARLO WISHING YOU WERE IN EGYPT—



OR IN EGYPT WISHING YOU WERE IN INDIA—



OR IN INDIA WISHING YOU WERE IN JAPAN—



OR IN JAPAN WISHING YOU WERE IN HONOLULU—



OR EVEN IN HONOLULU WISHING YOU WERE BACK IN LONDON.



THE SHARE-OUT.



The Lament of a Lame Rhymester

I AM not ill from brew of hops
Nor stranded on financial rocks;
I am not sore beset with folks
Who seek to dash my fondest hopes,
Nor is my sleep by dreams disturbed
Of spectres from another world;
My sorrow is: *I cannot find*
Two words that make a perfect rhyme.

When I was in my callow youth
I joined a thriving poets' group,
And was not daunted by the fact
That all my efforts were inapt;
I thought these thwartings of my aims
Were merely mental growing pains
And that, on reaching man's estate,
I'd get this rhyming business taped.

But later and maturer thought
Did not encourage or exhort,
Until, in Autumn '29,
At last I found a perfect rhyme.
I touched it up; I sent it in;
I thought it was the very thing. . . .
The postman's quick staccato steps
Brought editorial regrets.

When, shaken to the core, I sought
To find wherein lay my default,
With midnight oil, wet towel on head
(It made my reason flow and ebb),
I realised—alas! too late—
That when my brain had tried to shape
This rhyme, which should have brought
me fame,
I'd used the selfsame word again.

* * * * *

But still I think and trust and hope
I'll get it right before I croak.

["Best of luck."—ED.]

Charivaria

A MAN who appeared in a London Police Court has been bound over to keep the peace. That is, presumably, if he happens to find any.

* * *

"How could a man swindle people who trusted in him!" asks a writer. We refuse to advise him; he must just find out for himself.

* * *



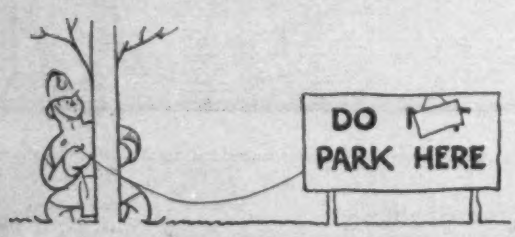
As a newspaper correspondent points out, the gas and electricity companies are fighting a ceaseless battle. But it's rather a pity that they have to dig *all* their trenches along main thoroughfares.

* * *

"First cut up the tripe into convenient lengths," says an expert. This is known as serial publication.

* * *

Foreigners still with cheek unbounded,
Not understanding our British form,
Said we were sheep. They are now confounded
Watching us wether the storm.



So far the police have apparently been unable to capture "Flannel-Foot," the most silent and elusive of London burglars. But no doubt they will, just as soon as he tries to park his car in some unauthorised place.

* * *

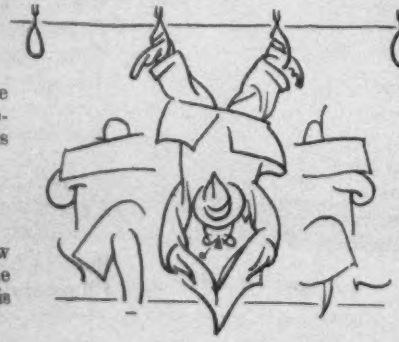
The habit of celebrating a silver wedding is dying out in America, we are told. So is the habit of having one.

* * *

English and French mannequins are to hold a contest. The idea, presumably, is to find out if a miss is as good as a mlle.

* * *

A naturalist reports that he saw two swallows near Epping during the Christmas holidays. The next step is to find out if Africa is two short.



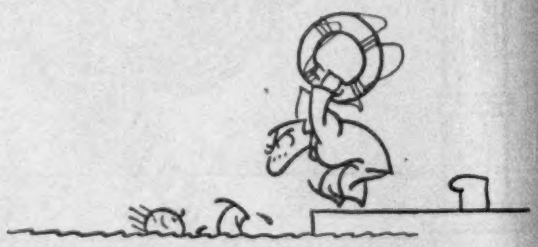
As we go to press we learn that Smith minor is now able to sit up in bed and murmur that it was worth it.

* * *

A magistrate has observed that no nice neighbour would practise a wind-instrument after midnight. Kind hearts are more than clarionets.

* * *

A film to be produced in London is to have a Hollywood producer, a Russian leading lady and a German director. These are, we believe, its only claims to be described as an all-British production.



A six-foot man weighing eighteen stone plunged into a canal and rescued a tax-collector. His excuse was ignorance.

* * *

Millions of dollars are spent every year on rouge by American women. It's only the very old-fashioned Red Indians who still call them paleface squaws.

* * *

Prospective settlers in South Africa are advised that there is money in ostriches. But seldom, we understand, more than a few small coins of little value.

* * *

A man who has just celebrated his hundredth birthday says that he attributes his longevity to "nothing in particular." The strange part of it is that this is not the name of a patent-medicine.

* * *

A ventriloquist has bequeathed a fortune to his dummy—the first legatee for a long time who has nothing to say to Press interviewers.

* * *

"Tube travellers should hang on to their rights," declares a writer. When these get tired, they should change over and hang on to their lefts.



A WELL-EARNED REWARD

THE GOOD FAIRY BRITANNIA (*to the Principal Boy*)—

"AND NOW TO PLEASE THE STALLS, THE PIT AND GALLERY,
ALLOW ME TO PRESENT A RISE OF SALARY."

[Parliament is expected to vote during this month an increase of salary to Cabinet Ministers including the PRIME MINISTER himself.]



THE BRITISH CHARACTER

IMPORTANCE OF NOT BEING INTELLECTUAL

More Seasonable Problems

(1)

"Isn't it Aunt Maud's birthday some time in January?"

"On the 13th."

"Well, don't you think she'd like a orange china frog whose back comes off? For jam, or ink, or something."

"I don't know, dear. I've been rather wondering myself whether she wouldn't be pleased with a little sort of thing made of beads to hang up on the wall."

"What for?"

"What *for*, Henry? How can I tell you what *for*? Old Miss Plank sent it to me for a Christmas present. It was very kind of her."

"I quite see. And I suppose you thought it'd be very kind to send it to Aunt Maud."

"Unless she'd rather have a sort of patent book-marker thing that looks rather like a tiny little surgical instrument."

"Or a blue vase with green knobs on it."

"Henry! What are you thinking about? One of the children gave you that. *Of course* you can't send it to Aunt Maud."

"What can I do with it then?"

"Put it on the mantelpiece in your room of course. At least till the end of the holidays."

(2)

"Could we get the plans for the day settled?"

"It's perfectly simple, dear. The servants *must* have a rest after all the Christmas rush. *You're* going out shooting, and you must take John and Charles, and John must drive the car straight back here and pick up the groceries at the station on the way—oh, and leave a note at the Rectory about the Christmas-tree for the village—and he can pick me up at the same time. I shall be either at the school, or looking in on Mrs. Egg and the baby, or somewhere about the village; and lunch will be *cold*. And this morning I think we ought to take down the holly and stuff and move those Christmas-cards from the mantelpiece. It makes less work for the maids, and I want them to have a rest."

"But how are we to get back without the car?"

"Oh, I can easily fetch you anywhere you say, any time you like. I thought we'd better all be out this afternoon because of the servants. The children have got a hockey-match, and they can have tea at the Rectory or some-

where; and I'm going to drop Aunt Winnie at the Manor House, and I don't really want any tea myself—anyway, I'm much better without it—and I'm sure you can get a cup of tea at the keeper's cottage."

"Couldn't we come home for tea?"

"No, dear, I'm afraid it's absolutely impossible. They *must* have a rest."

"What about dinner?"

"There'll be something cold at seven o'clock. I'm sure you won't mind. The servants want to get off early to a dance."

(3)

"Mummie, you know that picture in a gold frame that I put in your stocking for Christmas?"

"Yes, darling. It was *lovely*."

"Yes, wasn't it? And it was frightfully expensive. I mean it cost really quite a lot of money. Of course I *wanted* it to. I don't mean I didn't *want* it to be expensive."

"Oh, no; I quite understand."

"Well, where is it?"

"It's in my room. I haven't quite decided where to put it yet."

"Well, I've thought of a *marvellous* place. Over the writing-table in the drawing-room. Then everybody could see it."

"So they could."

"You know it's got its name written under it: 'What a Saucy Boy!' And I think the dog's expression is *marvellous*—don't you?"

"Yes, I do."

"If I could have a hammer and some nails and a chair and a footstool I think I could hang it up for you."

"Thank you very much, darling."

"Then shall I?"

"Not this minute. You see we must think out very carefully what would be *absolutely* the best place for such a very nice picture. Now what about the bathroom?"

"Oh, that's a marvellous idea! Then everybody could see it, couldn't they?"

(4)

"I must say this seems to me a bit excessive."

"It isn't really, Henry. It's only the hamper you sent to poor Cousin Hilda for Christmas."

"And what's this account from the bookseller's? Never ordered a thing from him in my life."

"Yes, dear, it's all your godchildren. You sent each of them a book this year, but I'm afraid I forgot to tell you about it."

"Oh, did I? And to whom, if I may ask, did I send a cut-glass flower-vase, one pound five shillings and sixpence?"

"You can't have forgotten, dear. That's what *I myself* gave you off the Christmas-tree." E. M. D.

Great Display of Acrobatics by a Canon

"After tea the President, Canon ——, in a pleasing speech amidst a sparkle of fireworks switched on the floodlights and formerly declared the Court open, at the same time playing the first shuttle over the net, and wished the club a very successful season which they are looking forward to."—*Irish Diocesan Magazine.*



"WE'VE HAD A DELIGHTFUL EVENING, OLD MAN. YOU MUST ASK US AGAIN."

The Private Papers of Arthur Widdleswick:

or, More Red Tape in the Home

DEALING WITH CHRISTMAS

THERE are some, I dare to hope, who will remember the fragmentary account I was able to give in these pages a few years ago of the domestic affairs of my old friend, Arthur Widdleswick. My friend, I regret to say, passed away quite recently, very shortly after his retirement from the post in the Civil Service in which he served so faithfully for most of a lifetime, but before he died he consented to my giving what publicity I liked to the way in which he had so successfully adapted to the needs of his private life the procedure he followed in official hours in the business of the State. Always of a retiring disposition, he shrank from such publicity, and all my requests for permission to publish further extracts from his papers during his lifetime met with adamant refusal.

Widdleswick's department, it may be recalled, was one of the older and more conservative Whitehall offices. He often told me that he could never bring himself to like the rush methods which I gather are now in certain quarters threatening to undermine the orderly conduct of State business. For him procedure was procedure. It became for him almost a creed, and I believe it was nothing less than a high sense of duty which impelled him to give his domestic establishment the benefits of a method which in his experience had worked so well in the affairs of the nation.

The material which is now at my disposal comprises a mass of private correspondence with friends, public bodies, tradesmen and others, many files of minutes and references which passed between himself and members of his family, and a collection of forms, schedules and what not which he used for the more orderly conduct of his domestic routine. It is bewildering both in its extent and its variety, and I find some difficulty in deciding where to start upon it. Perhaps at this season however I cannot do better than give some idea of the way in which Widdleswick was in the habit of dealing with the many difficult problems which arise out of the popular celebration of Christmas.

In this as in other matters there could be for Arthur Widdleswick no thought of "muddling through." He often told me that he found it necessary to get down to the job early in the autumn. He began, I believe, in September with the issue to members of his family of "Schedule A (Christmas Post)" relating to "Persons (if any) residing overseas to whom it is proposed to send parcels, letters or cards of greeting." That this document had invariably in the past produced a "Nil" return never deterred my friend from issuing it year by year at the appropriate time. On first acquaintance his system may seem to have been wasteful, but at any rate he had the satisfaction of feeling that if any friend of his family *had* removed overseas every possible step to meet the contingency had been taken.

With the beginning of November minutes would begin to pass between Widdleswick and his wife on the subject of plans for the household's festivities. Many documents lie before me as I write dealing with such matters as the financial estimates, the qualifications of proposed guests, and so on, but in the space of this article I can do no more than mention their existence.



Long before most people, Widdleswick was fully occupied with advance arrangements for the issue of Christmas cards and proposals regarding presents. Some idea of the thoroughness with which my friend tackled the card problem may be gained from the following specimen forms which he required Mrs. Widdleswick to complete and return to him at least fourteen clear days before the 25th December:—

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

Form C.G. 1*a* (*i.*)—*New Admissions*

The following information must be given in the space provided:—

1. Is proposed recipient single, married, widow, or a married couple living together?
2. Was any card, greeting, present or letter received by us from proposed recipient last year?
3. Are there grounds for supposing that card will be received by us from proposed recipient *this* year? (Grounds, if any, should be fully stated.)
4. If answer to (2) and/or (3) above is in the negative, in what circumstances is it proposed that proposed recipient should be sent a card?
5. Is it proposed that if a card is sent this year it should be treated as a precedent?

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

Form C.G.W. 2. *Revision of Register*

State—

1. Reference number of last year's issue.
2. Is it proposed that card should be sent again this year?
3. Was a card received by us last year?
4. If so, what evidence (if any) is there to show whether such card was posted (*a*) before, (*b*) after, the receipt of a card from us?

As with cards, so with presents, Widdleswick pursued his system with incomparable thoroughness. For presents within the family circle he had evolved a procedure to ensure that full consideration should be given to personal preferences. A form to give effect to it—which he required to be returned within seven days under penalty of its being treated as null and void—is much too long to reproduce here, so I content myself with one or two typical questions from it:—

4. Full description of any article or articles specially desired. (If none, write "None.")
5. Have you any idea of the cost?
6. Have representations been made



"Now, Myrtle, tell us what you would do if you were asked to track an escaped convict."

to any other member of the family concerning the same article or articles?

After Question 5 on the copy of the form I have before me I find written in pencil, "If some, write sum," and against Question 6, "If Mum, write Mum"; but these notes are not in my friend's handwriting and must represent, I think, an attempt at a joke by some member of his family.

I think I have quoted enough to show that Christmas in the Widdleswick establishment must have been a well-ordered occasion associated with none of the muddles and unfortunate contretemps which too often mar the festival in the ordinary home. But I hope I have said nothing to suggest that my friend was punctilious in his procedure to the point of lacking personal kindliness and consideration for others, for indeed the contrary is true. He was always genuinely regretful if the time taken by the inquiries he thought it necessary to set afoot resulted—as I fear they sometimes did—in an intended recipient going without a card or a gift on Christmas Day or an invitation to the festive board, and he would always try to rectify any omission as far as it was in his power to do so. Indeed I have in my own possession a Christmas greeting from him which reached me on the 1st of February a few years ago with a most profuse expression of regret for unavoidable delay. The very simple explanation, as it turned out, was that there had been some confusion between my registered number and that of another friend who had died during the year.

Lament on a Familiar Situation

The long day closes
Over the winter roses
(There are some somewhere, one supposes).
O day abhorred,
I have not read one word!

The day is dead;
I have not read;
Most empty is my head;
Guests unsolicited
Came here instead.
I went uncomforted,
Yet—tears, remain unshed—
I'll read in bed.

Decrystallized

Dear Mr. Punch,—The other day, while a comfortable express was whirling me away to my Christmas holiday in the company of your delightful pages, I received the shock of my life.

I had mildly mourned the destruction of the Crystal Palace from afar in a perhaps somewhat too perfunctory manner, and it was not till I was engrossed in the article entitled "Poor Old Palace" that I remembered something which left me gasping.

Arrived at journey's end I burrowed among my goods and chattels like a dog after the beloved bone. Yes, there it was, lurking in an old slipper, that little ancient scrap of paper, yellow with age—like myself:—"Army Form Z21. Certificate of Disembodiment on Demobilisation"!

And down below I read tremblingly, "Place of Rejoining in case of emergency—Crystal Palace."

The question is, most noble Sir, what do I do about it now?

Yours respectfully,
A Disembodied Spirit.

[Write to Mr. Duff-Cooper.—*Ed.*]

At the Pictures

"TECHNICOLOR"

I AM afraid that the film version, in "Technicolor," of *The Garden of Allah* will have to be classified as Public



A SAHARA IDYLL

Boris Androvsky . . . . . CHARLES BOYER

Disappointment, possibly not Number One, but very near it. Everyone will want to see it, not only because of the fame of the novel, but because MARLENE DIETRICH plays *Domini* and CHARLES BOYER plays *Boris*, and TILLY LOSCH dances, and AUBREY SMITH is *Father Roubier*, a magnificent monk to be married by; but I fear that "Public Disappointment" will be the verdict. Whose fault this is, I am not sufficiently an expert to tell; but I suspect either DAVID O. SELZNICK, the producer, or RICHARD BOLESLAWSKI, the director, one of whom could surely have arranged for a less congested screen.

We have been accustomed for so long to more generous views of the participants in the movies, that the meagre sections of the performers vouchsafed to us in *The Garden of Allah* are absurdly inadequate. Now and then, it is true, there are desert scenes under a wide sky, but the next instant the screen is entirely filled by MARLENE'S head, or the melancholy features of *Boris*, or AUBREY SMITH'S imposing beard. Perhaps "Technicolor" is to blame. If so, the sooner, say I, that we return to plain photography, the better.

But apart from the defects of the camera-cum-palette, the story is not well told. I personally found it dreary: too many grains of the illimitable sand had got into it.

It is not often that a film deals with a lifetime. For the most part we are shown episodes in the career of this or that hero and heroine, lasting at the most a few weeks or days; but in *A Woman Rebels* KATHERINE HEPBURN, as *Pamela*, matures from a perplexed and suppressed Victorian schoolgirl into middle age, growing visibly older all the while, not a little assisted by her bonnets, and HERBERT MARSHALL, as a diplomatist, keeps pace with her by adding, at judicious moments, more grey to his wig. But when he is in the fifties and she is in the forties they come at last to terms and retire to connubial bliss at the Embassy in Washington. There is a baby who also has to grow, from the tenderest years, when it splashes in a tub, into a self-willed young woman; so that the processes of evolution are continually before our eyes.

A Woman Rebels is an interesting film, and KATHERINE HEPBURN has opportunities to flash her warm womanhood, but it affords no general proof that Victorian children had such a poor time, even without the telephone and motor-cars and wireless; and the particular proof that *Pamela* became the mother of an illegitimate child is



NURSE MARSHALL

Thomas Lane . . . . HERBERT MARSHALL

also lacking. One can go to the waxworks without such disastrous results.

People who, like myself, may have wondered where the music-hall knight had gone, and why it is so long since we heard his robust celebrations of Scottish amativeness and Scottish domestic affections and Scottish inebriety and glee, will like to know that HARRY LAUDER has taken to the screen, and that in a film called *The End of the Road* he sings several songs. It is a simple affair, in which LAUDER, as *John Macgregor*, is the head of a troupe travelling in caravans, giving concerts in this town and that. *Macgregor's* elder daughter supplies the drama by marrying a crooner and conductor, who gets drunk and neglects her, and is finally burnt to death while setting fire to his father-in-law's show. But, though simple, LAUDER'S songs (with walking-sticks even crookeder than ever) are good—not quite like old times, because the singer is not so young or so resonant as he was, but good all the same. E. V. L.



AND SHE WENT TO BE ALONE IN THE DESERT.

Count Anteoni . . . . . BASIL RATHBONE
Domini Enfilden . . . . . MARLENE DIETRICH
Batouch . . . . . JOSEPH SCHILDKRAUT



"Good show?"
"Foul."
"Cocktails?"
"Wizard."

Möglichkeiten

"Möglichkeiten," literally, is German for "possibilities." It is very irritating how foreigners translate such things haphazardly. Such a word has *no* parallel in the English mode of behaviour. Either we are definitely going to do a thing, definitely *not* going to do it, or still thinking the matter over. There is nothing whatever to do with possibilities.

An Austrian, on the other hand, invariably finds anything ranging from two to twenty possibilities and then proceeds to point out that *none* really can be considered possible.

When I first arrived in Vienna a friend, who apparently spent all his week-ends climbing, asked me to join him the next Saturday. I readily agreed, and devoted Friday to buying mountaineering boots, climbing boots, thick sweater and other suitable articles of clothing. We were to meet at 2.30 P.M., Saturday, on the station.

Barely ten minutes late my friend arrived, and as soon as greetings were over remarked, "Now, there are four possibilities."

"What?" I asked.

"I say that there are four possibilities," he repeated, looking slightly hurt that I had not at once grasped his meaning.

"Oh," I said, "what are they?"

"Either we go climbing, like arranged. That is the first possibility. Or my friend says he give me this week the canoe. There is also the Wiener Wald we could walk in Sunday. Or we borrow a car I know and go in to the Wachau."

"Well, just as you like," I said politely, and feared that my mountaineering equipment was going to be wasted.

"If we go climbing," he continued, "I think the weather not too good. The same for canoe, of course. And we must go anyhow rather a long way to fetch it. Then Wiener Wald—I know it really too well; I am not so keen. Then also we cannot be sure to get the car."

Being completely inexperienced in possibilities, I was at a loss until he asked me again if I had any preference.

"As we are here," I said, "I think we might as well catch the train and do what we arranged."

"Very well," he answered rather grudgingly.

But by this time the train was gone, and we spent the week-end bathing some way up the Danube.

Only last night I was with the same friend again. We had eventually arrived in a Keller. He sat for a long time scanning the wine-list. I counted down both sides of it and said, "There are thirty-eight possibilities." He gave me a blank look, as if the remark had conveyed nothing to him.

Some time after 2 A.M. he seemed to tire of the Keller and began: "Now, the first——"

I broke in abruptly: "Actually there are *no* possibilities. In five minutes I leave to catch the last bus home."

In five minutes' time my friend meekly accompanied me and caught the last bus home too without a murmur.

The only way to treat possibilities is to be absolutely firm.

The Marble Archdeacon

I HAVE never told you people, have I, the story of the Marble Archdeacon, the Rotten Row-boat, the Nelson Columnist and the Hyde Park Coiner? Well—pausing only to remark that if these four characters or objects had been mentioned one by one and slowly on the music-hall stage some of you exhibitionists would have begun to clap after the last one, instead of sitting there superciliously and letting them trickle like so much water in one duck's ear and out of another—I soon shall have.

One night (this is the beginning), at a time when most really worth-while people are asleep in bed, or at least in taxis, the Hyde Park Coiner called furtively on the Nelson Columnist. The latter—so called because he was twice the man he had been when he was described as the Half-Nelson Columnist—was sitting with his feet up on his office desk, reading; the picture of depressed industry. At sight of the Hyde Park Coiner he put his feet down quickly, because in the treacherous half-light he thought his visitor was a boy with a tray of bacon-and-eggs. When he saw who it was he put his feet back again.

"You need help, I presume?" he said. "Another alibi, no doubt. More and more I realise the truth of what my poor old uncle used to say. 'My boy,' he used to say, 'once get into touch with the underworld and they regard you as an inexhaustible stop-me-and-alibi-one.'"

The Hyde Park Coiner said, No, what he needed was not an alibi but active assistance in getting rid of a Marble Archdeacon. "I remember," he said, "you once told me you helped to dump a hundred-and-forty-pound canon in a lake. This seems to be a job of the same kind. We could do it in the small hours of to-morrow morning."

"What I helped to dump in the lake was ordnance, not clergy," said the Nelson Columnist in a distant manner. "Furthermore, in the small hours you mention I shall be escorting a young lady home from a dance."

"Bring her along too. Experience for her."

Well, what with one thing and another, and a little too much of both, in the following small hours the Nelson Columnist, the Hyde Park Coiner and a girl named Hortense might have been seen (though they thought not) putting out into a convenient lake in a small boat with the Marble Archdeacon lying on the bottom-board. Hortense was already a little peeved about the whole affair. She constantly declared that this was not her idea of a jaunt, and she rudely asked the Hyde Park Coiner why he allowed himself to be saddled with a marble statue of an archdeacon instead of sticking out for a silver one of a bishop. He explained that it had been palmed off on him in the dark for lead.

"You should have known they never do archdeacons in lead," she said contemptuously.

"How could I tell in the dark? They told me it was a verger, anyway."

"They don't do vergers in lead, either."

"What do they do them in, then?"

"I forget," Hortense said, and she shook the Nelson Columnist, who was half asleep. "Hey! What do they do vergers in?"

"Saucepans, like anything else," replied the Nelson Columnist drowsily.

Amid such bickering the voyage to the middle of the lake passed even more quickly than it would have passed if the lake had been even smaller than it was or if they had been nearer the middle when they started. When they arrived the Nelson Columnist woke up and took his part in the argument about the best way of getting the Marble Archdeacon out of the boat and into the lake.

His idea was that he should sit in the stern with his arm round Hortense to keep the boat steady while the Hyde Park Coiner picked up the Marble Archdeacon and threw him overboard. The contentions of the others had certain points of similarity, the Hyde Park Coiner (who had no gallantry in his composition) opining that he should sit alone in the stern with the electric torch while the other two did the work, and Hortense opining that she should.

The end of it was that not one of them would attempt the job unless both the others helped. The Hyde Park Coiner said disgustedly that it reminded him of China.

"No initiative," he declared. "No independence."

"I'd feel different if it was a bishop," Hortense said sulkily.

"Well, naturally you would," said the Nelson Columnist. "We'd all feel different if it was a bishop."

The Hyde Park Coiner said *he* wouldn't feel different unless it was a cardinal perhaps. "Fastidious, that's me," he observed. Several more minutes went by in ecclesiastical discussion until at last Hortense announced that she felt cold. It was agreed that something must be done about this. "You take the head," said the Nelson Columnist, "you take the feet, and I'll sit on the middle to maintain his equilibrium." And they made a concerted attack on the Marble Archdeacon.

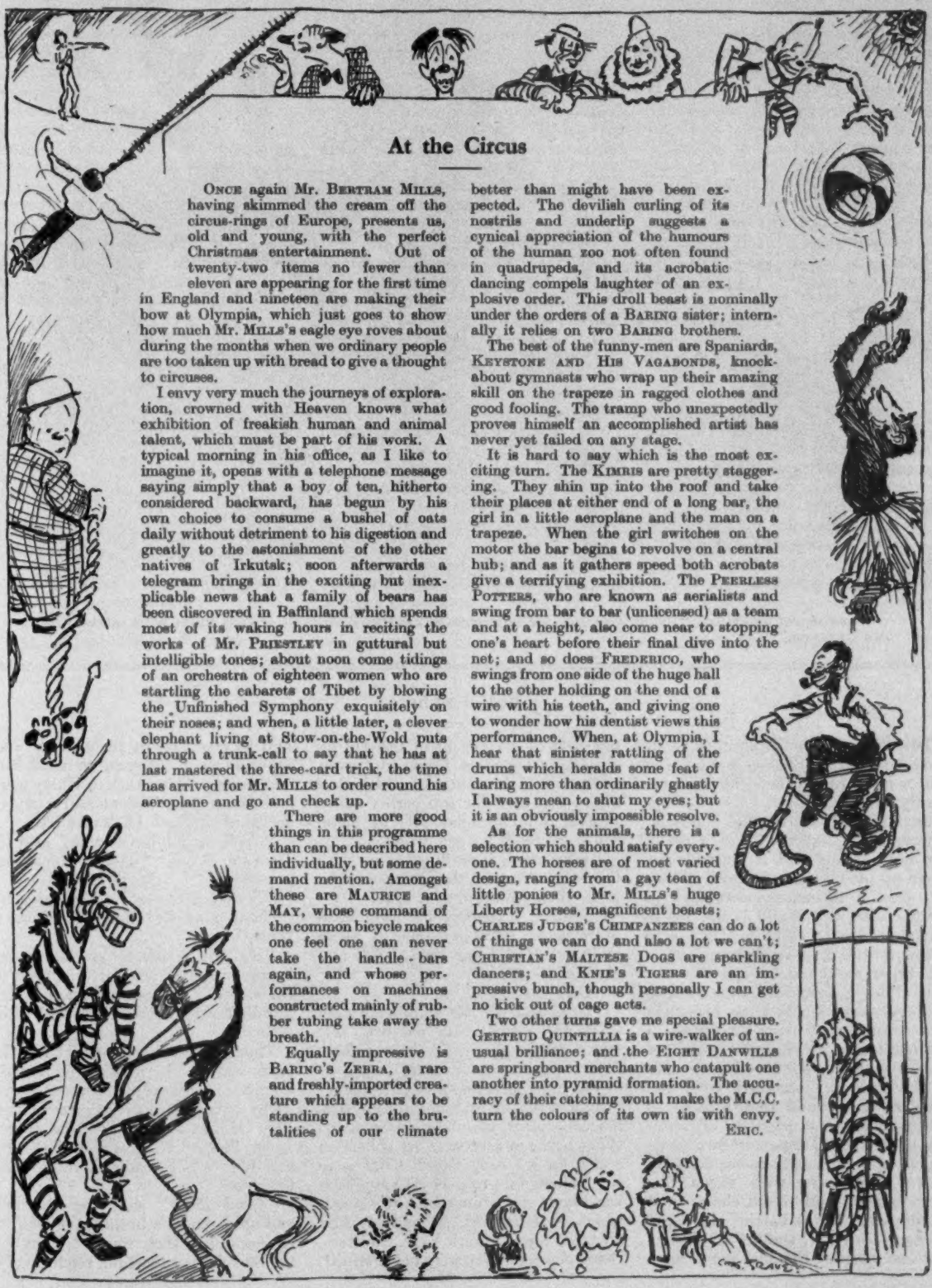
It is impossible any longer to hide the fact that pretty soon they all went through the bottom of the boat. This was the Rotten Row-boat I mentioned to begin with.

My reason for narrating this story is to correct an impression, current as a result of a letter Hortense had printed in a daily paper's series under the title "Why I Turned Him Down," that she turned down the Nelson Columnist because she couldn't stand the way he blinked one eye when he had a cinder in the other. In the first place she had (*see* above) other reasons, and in the second place he never gave her the opportunity to turn him down, anyway.

R. M.



"MY FRIENDS, IT IS NOT MY INTENTION TO WORK YOU UP INTO A STATE OF MASS-HYSTERIA."



At the Circus

ONCE again Mr. BERTRAM MILLS, having skimmed the cream off the circus-rings of Europe, presents us, old and young, with the perfect Christmas entertainment. Out of twenty-two items no fewer than eleven are appearing for the first time in England and nineteen are making their bow at Olympia, which just goes to show how much Mr. MILLS's eagle eye roves about during the months when we ordinary people are too taken up with bread to give a thought to circuses.

I envy very much the journeys of exploration, crowned with Heaven knows what exhibition of freakish human and animal talent, which must be part of his work. A typical morning in his office, as I like to imagine it, opens with a telephone message saying simply that a boy of ten, hitherto considered backward, has begun by his own choice to consume a bushel of oats daily without detriment to his digestion and greatly to the astonishment of the other natives of Irkutsk; soon afterwards a telegram brings in the exciting but inexplicable news that a family of bears has been discovered in Baffinland which spends most of its waking hours in reciting the works of Mr. PRIESTLEY in guttural but intelligible tones; about noon come tidings of an orchestra of eighteen women who are startling the cabarets of Tibet by blowing the Unfinished Symphony exquisitely on their noses; and when, a little later, a clever elephant living at Stow-on-the-Wold puts through a trunk-call to say that he has at last mastered the three-card trick, the time has arrived for Mr. MILLS to order round his aeroplane and go and check up.

There are more good things in this programme than can be described here individually, but some demand mention. Amongst these are MAURICE and MAY, whose command of the common bicycle makes one feel one can never take the handle-bars again, and whose performances on machines constructed mainly of rubber tubing take away the breath.

Equally impressive is BARING'S ZEBRA, a rare and freshly-imported creature which appears to be standing up to the brutalities of our climate better than might have been expected. The devilish curling of its nostrils and underlip suggests a cynical appreciation of the humours of the human zoo not often found in quadrupeds, and its acrobatic dancing compels laughter of an explosive order. This droll beast is nominally under the orders of a BARING sister; internally it relies on two BARING brothers.

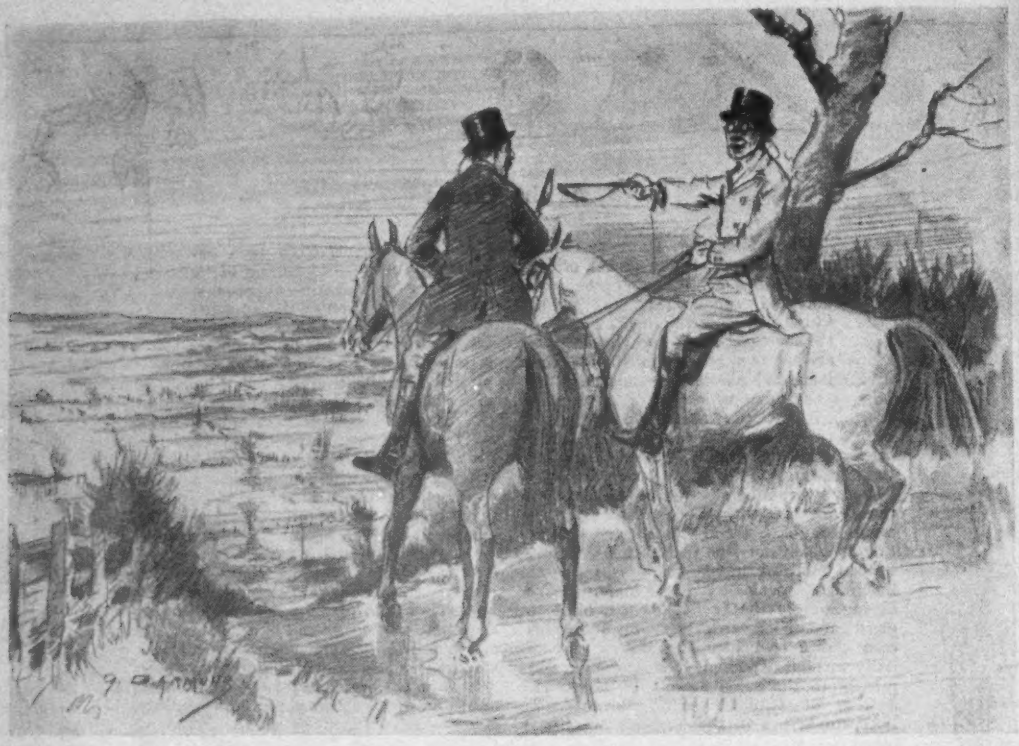
The best of the funny-men are Spaniards, KEYSTONE AND HIS VAGABONDS, knock-about gymnasts who wrap up their amazing skill on the trapeze in ragged clothes and good fooling. The tramp who unexpectedly proves himself an accomplished artist has never yet failed on any stage.

It is hard to say which is the most exciting turn. The KIMRIS are pretty staggering. They shin up into the roof and take their places at either end of a long bar, the girl in a little aeroplane and the man on a trapeze. When the girl switches on the motor the bar begins to revolve on a central hub; and as it gathers speed both acrobats give a terrifying exhibition. The PEERLESS POTTERS, who are known as aerialists and swing from bar to bar (unlicensed) as a team and at a height, also come near to stopping one's heart before their final dive into the net; and so does FREDERICO, who swings from one side of the huge hall to the other holding on the end of a wire with his teeth, and giving one to wonder how his dentist views this performance. When, at Olympia, I hear that sinister rattling of the drums which heralds some feat of daring more than ordinarily ghastly I always mean to shut my eyes; but it is an obviously impossible resolve.

As for the animals, there is a selection which should satisfy everyone. The horses are of most varied design, ranging from a gay team of little ponies to Mr. MILLS's huge Liberty Horses, magnificent beasts; CHARLES JUDGE'S CHIMPANZEES can do a lot of things we can do and also a lot we can't; CHRISTIAN'S MALTESE DOGS are sparkling dancers; and KNIE'S TIGERS are an impressive bunch, though personally I can get no kick out of cage acts.

Two other turns gave me special pleasure. GERTRUD QUINTILLIA is a wire-walker of unusual brilliance; and the EIGHT DANWILLS are springboard merchants who catapult one another into pyramid formation. The accuracy of their catching would make the M.C.C. turn the colours of its own tie with envy.

ERIC.



Short-sighted Enthusiast. "THERE YOU ARE, MY BOY—FINEST VALE IN ENGLAND—ALWAYS RIDES WELL WHATEVER THE WEATHER."

Full Circle

THE other day our Captain Bayonet had a brain-wave. Strangely enough he was on a Board of Officers at the time, hardly, one would think, a good forcing-house for even brain-ripples. Not only, however, did Bayonet have a really fine brain-billow, but it actually got taken up by Those in Authority. The fact that it ultimately developed in the peculiar way it did is not really Bayonet's fault: still, he can't help feeling a little responsible somehow.

It began many months ago when the War Office got an idea that various military store depôts were becoming overcrowded with large quantities of obsolete stores which ought to be got rid of to make room for something more in the fashion. Judging from the circulars sent round they seemed so het-up over this question of obsolescence that our Lieutenant Swordfrog suggested they must have been coming across inventories with items like "Arquebuses," and "Shot, chain," and possibly even "Axes, battle" still listed thereon. Anyway, the net result was that one morning Bayonet found himself part of a Quorum of Officers inspecting a big Store Depôt at Havershot, during the course of which they discovered in a far top corner called Bay 82 an enormous pile of metal canisters, refills for gas-masks.

"Why aren't these down below with the others?" asks the President, the King of the Quorum as it were.

"Ah, Sir," explained the aged Head Storekeeper, stroking one of them lovingly, "these are Mark VIII. and obsollit——"

"Ob—what?"

"Obsollit. The downstairs ones are Mark IX. What they use now," he added disparagingly. "'As a slightly different top or some such."

The Storekeeper was an ex-Quartermaster-Sergeant, and, like all Q.M.S.'s, his conception of a store was something between a private art collection and a bank strong-room. That is to say, getting him to part with any item was like tapping him for heart's blood, which explains why he had such an affection for the Mark VIII. canisters. Being obsolete, they were never issued, and he could count them every week and find them the same as it left him, whereas any Tom, Dick or Harry could walk in with an indent and carry off scores of his Mark IX.'s at a blow.

"Well, *they* 'll have to go," said the Quorum Boss. "That's something, anyway."

"Seems a waste," added another. "There must be about a million of them."

"No, Sir," corrected the Storekeeper austerely, for this was right up his street. "Sixteen thousand, seven hundred and forty-two—and four defective."

Then it was that Bayonet had his brain-wave. "If there's only a slight difference in the top," he pointed out, "why shouldn't we recommend that they be sent to factory to be altered and re-issued? It'd save the W.O. some money. Not," he added bitterly, "that they care."

"Good idea!" said the Quorum; and so Bayonet's brain-wave was incorporated in their report. They left the Storekeeper tearfully regarding his

beloved Canisters, Gas Mask, Mark VIII. in an agony of impending separation and looking rather like a mother-cat who knows her kittens are doomed to be drowned.

Well, the brain-wave went up through the usual channels, was adopted (and credit taken for it) by Somebody Very Senior, and in due course the firm of Messrs. Tinspot and Co., Ltd., were given a contract for the adaptation and supply. Each week, thereafter, two thousand at a time, Canisters, Gas-mask, Mark VIII. were formally issued by the Storeman to the Tinspot Works, there altered as to the top, and ultimately returned to the store as Canisters, Gas-mask, Mark VIII.*

* * * * *

Some three months later Bayonet happened to be in the same store on business. While waiting about, he had a look upstairs at Bay 82, rather in the manner of a proud father whose son has now gone to school taking a peep at the old cradle in the box-room. Bay 82 was bare, except for a forlorn label reading "Canisters, Gas-mask, Mark VIII.," on which some bygone humorist, evidently a student of Stores' Lists, had pencilled—

"Arrows, Bow 20
Arrows, Agricultural .. 1
Arrows, statue of, *see* Cupid
Arrows, in spelling, *see* above."

"Ain't 'arf 'ad a time, Sir," puffed the Storekeeper, suddenly bustling up, "over those Canisters, Mark VIII. Keeps me right on the hop."

"But you've got rid of them all now, I see."

"I have, Sir," replied the old man proudly. "*And* two lots more. Second lot's going away to the factory this minute, and I'm just expecting a third batch in."

"I—I don't quite understand," faltered Bayonet.

"Well, it's like this 'ere, Sir. As soon as I found how quick they were getting through those Mark VIII.'s I naturally indented for more or I'd get choked off for letting my stores run out. But the Tinspot Works finishes before they come in, and then *they* get a choke-off for the delay in delivering the Mark VIII.* They say they can't get Mark VIII.'s from me, 'anding me the baby, like. Luckily I can say I've indented for 'em but that the firm supplying Mark VIII.'s have let me down. So *they* gets a choke-off for not——"

"But," asked Bayonet in a choked voice, "who is the firm supplying the Mark VIII.?"

"Same firm, I believe, Sir," replied the Storeman casually, as one to whom it was a mere detail. "However, I've got the job taped now and we run as smooth as. . . ."

Bayonet put his hand to his head and staggered out of the place in a coma.

Things certainly were running smoothly, as the Storeman had said. For, as he went, he saw a Tinspot lorry piled high with Mark VIII. canisters for conversion passing out of the main gates, while at the delivery side of the store another Tinspot lorry was just unloading the third lot of brand-new Mark VIII.'s that the Storeman had ordered.

So you see that Bayonet can't help feeling a little responsible, but he hasn't the vaguest idea what steps to take about it. The thing is just too big for him. So far all he's done is to buy a large number of Tinspot, Ltd. Ordinary shares. He says he thinks the firm has prospects. A. A.

Unseasonable Greetings

We have done with the eating and drinking,
The turkeys and laughter are dead;
We return to serious thinking
Of the problems ahead.
For now we have Christmas behind us
Our worries grow greater each day
As demand-notes are sent to remind us
There's the Neville to pay. M. H.



"Lot of seasickness about this year."



THE SERVANTS' BALL

Butler. "I FEAR, MY LADY, THAT HEMILY IS NOT A GOOD MIXER."

Orpheus and Eurydice

("Plug" Maloney, the Chicago racketeer, driven to higher things by the repeal of Prohibition, has been studying classical mythology. He forwards the following poem.)

A GUY called Orpheus had a uke,
A real big shot he was, like Duke,
And played it swell and class.
This Orpheus thought he'd like to splice
A hotcha dame called Eurydice,
And made a winning pass.

Now Eurydice went out one day
To pick some daisies by the way—
A phoney thing to do.
A snake from under cover jerks
And gives young Eurydice the works;
The poor dumb dame was through.

Well, Orpheus went and cut up rough;
I guess he thought the deal was tough,
But he was kinda cute;
He aimed to travel down below
Where Grecian stiffs would always go,
And play his uke to Plute.

There must have been some graft down there,
For Orpheus doesn't get the air,
But Plute gives him a break.
He says to Orpheus, "Take your frail,
But don't look backwards on the trail—
The only rule I make."

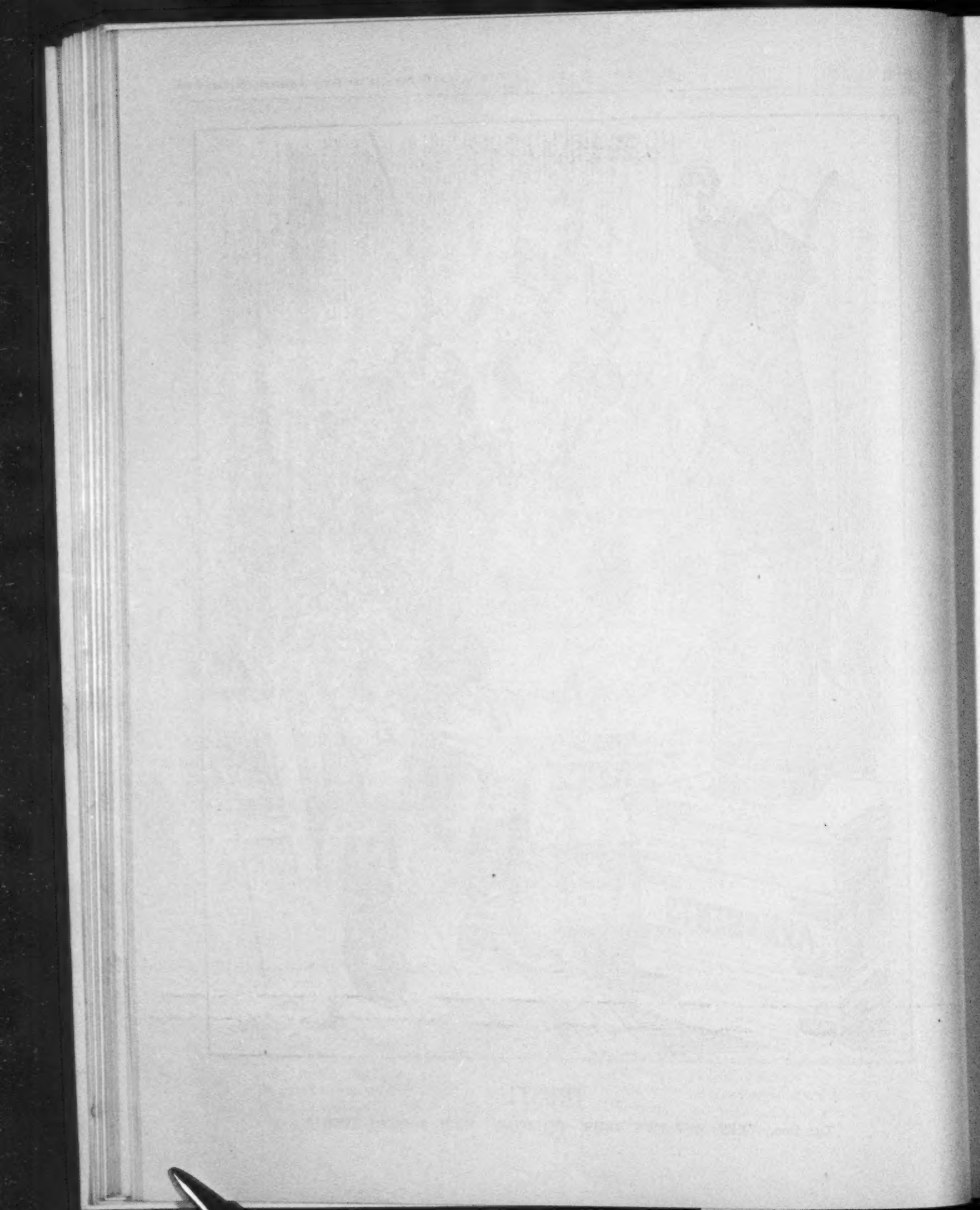
They hit the happy homeward track.
Then Orpheus, like a sap, looks back
To give his dame the eye.
Of course old Plute was kinda sore;
She had to join the stiffs once more
And leave him high and dry.

I don't think much to such a guy
Who'd lose his dame and go and try
To win her by a fluke.
It's no use muscling in below
Without the boys and guns in tow
With just a sissy uke.



TRUST!

THE DOG. "YES, BUT I'VE BEEN 'TRUSTING' SUCH A LONG TIME!"





Prisoner (dismissed with a caution by Lady Mayor). "THANK YOU, LIDY—YOU 'RE A REAL GENT."

The World's Most Unlikely Story

ONCE upon a time there was an American born of American parents. Although fifty years of age he had as yet never travelled, always having been too poor to do so. At last he scraped together his modest savings and sailed away from America without the smallest regret, having always disliked it particularly. He came first of all to England.

Upon arriving in London he went to a small hotel, unpacked his bags, and then sat in the lounge in a gaily-cretonned chair and read *Punch*, at which he laughed heartily. He was joined by a Scotsman, a most affable forthcoming fellow, who ordered two whiskies - and - sodas. These were brought, the ice tinkling melodiously against the sides of the glasses, and the Scotsman paid for them.

The two men then sallied forth into the brilliant sunshine, the American wearing a bowler-hat and the Scotsman a boater. After walking a short time in the streets, the American commenting favourably meanwhile upon the size and shape of the houses thereon, they entered a restaurant. There they were served with an English luncheon —delicate slices of roast beef, crinkly pieces of Yorkshire pudding, well-roasted potatoes and fresh young cabbage, followed by a perfect apple-tart. The Scotsman paid for the meal.

While they were sipping their excellent cups of coffee they became acquainted with a Russian, a gay cheerful young man, who was sitting at the table next to theirs. During the course of conversation they discovered that he was in no way connected with the late TSAR, had never in his life played the balalaika, and had an income of ten thousand a year. He wore horn-rimmed spectacles and a Guards' tie, and he immediately offered the American a Corona-Corona. The American, however, did not smoke cigars.

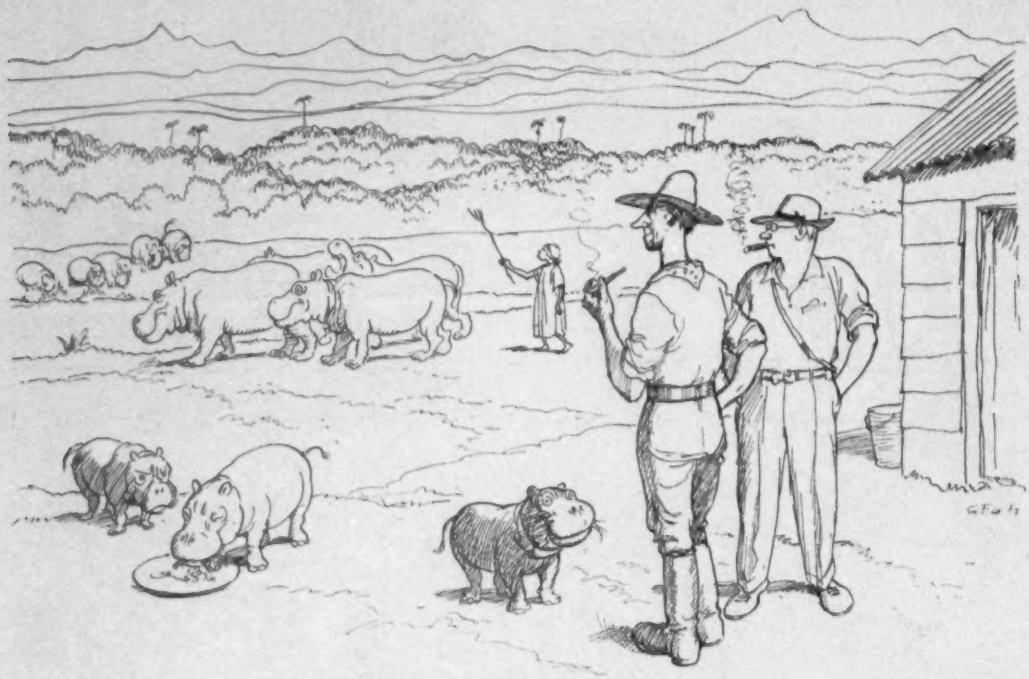
The Russian then suggested that they should all spend the afternoon in the country, and, the other two agreeing, he went and fetched his forty-horse-powered car and drove them in it to Sussex.

The Scotsman paid for the petrol.

The weather continued beautiful.

Being all of one mind as to where they should go, they arrived there speedily and easily, and after parking the car in a nearby gateway off the road, they proceeded to take a walk. First they wandered through woods filled with bluebells, none of which they picked, and then they sauntered in fields totally uninhabited by bulls, irate farmers or aggravating insects. They spent a happy afternoon talking of this and that, and sometimes, of course, the other. The Scotsman spoke at great length on his proposed philanthropic ventures in the North, the Russian told of his successful activities in the engineering world, and the American, who was by far the most silent of the three, confessed that he was interested in absolutely nothing.

They returned to London in the cool of the evening, driving along the deserted roads. Back at his hotel the American took a shower and then rang the bell in his room marked "Waiter."



"YES, I ADMIT PIGS MAY BE MORE PROFITABLE, BUT THEY HAVEN'T GOT THE STYLE."

A waiter came.

The American gave the order for his dinner—a Dover sole, lamb cutlets and junket, and, after brushing his thick black hair, followed the waiter down into the dining-room. The Scotsman, who had just begun his meal of corn on the cob, pumpkin-pie and waffles, immediately invited the American to join him at his table, and insisted upon sharing a bottle of *vin rosé* with him.

After dinner the two friends went to a cinema together. They saw an English film. It was good. Then they came home and went to their beds—their long soft comfortable beds, spread with fine linen sheets and warm flossy blankets and non-skidding eider-downs. The electric lights by them worked, and seemed in no way connected with the other lights in the room.

The Russian meanwhile had taken his sister to dine at the Savoy, where they had indulged in oysters and stout. Still gay, still laughing, he took her on to a revue, and then to a night-club to dance. He danced badly, but he enjoyed himself, and hummed all the time—unfortunately only on one note, as he was tone deaf.

Finally, having first escorted his sister to their mother's house in Belgrave Square, he reached his smart flat in Mayfair and settled down to a few moments' quiet reading of Mr. P. G. WODEHOUSE's latest over a last pipe. When eventually, with a chuckle, he closed the book, he put it tidily back in the bookcase, straightened the sofa cushions, folded the evening paper, placed his buttonhole in a glass of water, emptied his pipe-ash into the grate, carefully turned out all the lights, bolted the front-door, and went to bed. V. G.

Acquiring an Engine

"I'VE got an ingine," announced little Podgy McSumph.

"Why, so you have, Podgy," laying aside my morning paper. "Somebody must have been very good to you."

"Ye turn that wee thing there," explained Podgy, proudly displaying his acquisition, "an' it goes runnin' awa' the same as a big steam-ingine."

"And I see it has a name too—*Queen Elizabeth*. You're a lucky boy."

"Would ye like to play wi' me an' ma ingine?"

"Of course I would."

He got down on his hands and knees and I joined him.

"Noo," said Podgy, turning the small key projecting amidships, "it's goin' to be the express skooshin' awa' to London."

He gave the engine a slight push and, whirring importantly, it made its somewhat laboured way across the carpet, sticking out its chest, it seemed to me, like a conceited little pug dog, until it butted against the room door.

"D' ye see that?" cried Podgy. "There's an ingine for ye!"

I found myself getting keen. "Are you going to let me have a go now?" I asked, puffing hard at my pipe.

"Ay," agreed Podgy, "but it's me first again," turning the key with a look of grim determination on his face. "I'm goin' to make it go faster than ever."

"I think it was a little slower that time," I remarked, perhaps with a tinge of jealousy, as the *Queen Elizabeth* completed her second trip.

"Ye're tellin' fibs," retorted Podgy. "But just you wait," making vicious faces at the key. "I'm going to send it richt through the door this time."

"No, no, Podgy," gently dispossessing him of *Queen Elizabeth*; "you must learn to think of others. It's my turn now."

"Weel, I'll bet ye a hundred pound ye'll never make it go as fast as me," watching me intently.

I smiled confidently. "Well, we'll see. I fancy the great secret is to screw it up as tight as it will go."

"Will it be sixty miles an 'oor?" gasped Podgy, no doubt impressed by my strong work with the key.

"Now," I announced, "this is going to be a really sensational trip."

It proved, alas! to be the *Queen Elizabeth's* last trip. She made a spasmodic bound forward, stood on her head for a moment, fell over on her side and lay quivering, with an ominous internal rattle, the cause of which was painfully obvious even to a layman.

"Podgy, wee man," I said, forcing myself to look at him, "I'm afraid we've burst the mainspring."

"Is it a' broke?" exclaimed Podgy, staring in wonderment at the poor hulk.

"Yes; but never mind, Podgy," greatly relieved to find that he was taking the thing so well. "Do you know where we are going now? We're going down to the village to buy you a new engine."

"Are we?" all of a twitter. "Come on, then."

* * * * *

"I could gie ye anither *Queen Elizabeth*," said old Mrs. McCraw at the Store, gazing at us over her spectacles with an air of placid detachment, "for twa shillings."

"Have you anything better than that?" I asked.

"Weel, ye could hae a *Mary Queen o' Scots*, but they come in at five shillings apiece."

"Get one o' these ones," urged Podgy in a loud whisper.

"We'll have a *Mary Queen of Scots*," I said with decision.

As we set off on our homeward journey Podgy walked in silent rapture with *Mary Queen of Scots* clasped tightly to his breast. But presently he looked up at me thoughtfully and asked, "Is this to be ma very own ingine noo for ever an' ever?"

"Certainly, Podgy."

"But maybe Willie Pilkie 'll be wild if ye don't buy him an ingine as weel as me."

"Why should he be angry?"

"Because," replied Podgy calmly, "it was his ingine that ye broke."

I stopped and gaped at him. "Was *Queen Elizabeth* not your own engine?"

"No," said Podgy. "I gave Willie Pilkie a bit o' chewin'-gum to let me have a lend o' it till dinner-time."

Perhaps the Lord President of the Court of Session could have made it clear to Podgy that in the eyes of the law he had obtained possession of *Mary Queen of Scots* by false pretences. But I couldn't. Instead I walked slowly and meditatively back to Mrs. McCraw's shop and bought another engine. D.

"Please Do Not Fold."

"On the whole, sizes are considerably larger than of recent years, but in this direction one may go too far. Witness a weary postman last night who had to ring the door-bell and await a long descent of stairs before it was opened, just in order to deliver a card twelve foot square."
Birmingham Paper.

Queering the Circle

"One day the pyramid will topple if a vicious circle is allowed to develop further, and the whole system of distribution in the Free State will crash."—*Irish Paper.*

"A Gardener's Calendar.

Large weeds on vacant ground may be left alone for the time being."—*Gardening Chat.*

We are seeing to this immediately.



"Where in the name of Clark Gable have you been all this time?"

At the Play

"BALALAIKA" (ADELPHI)

Balalaika is a musical show, but it has far more than music and colour to it. It is almost a cavalcade of Imperial Russia, and the coming of the Revolution gives excitement and weight to the plot, making it very different from the ordinary slender thread of a musical show.

The wheel goes full circle in the course of the evening as we move from the old Russia of the Tsars, in which *Count Peter Karagin* (Mr. ROGER TREVILLE) is considered too grand to marry *Lydia Marakova* (Miss MURIEL ANGELUS), the ballet-dancer, to post-War Paris, where she is the daughter of the *Soviet Ambassador* and he a penniless White Russian earning a precarious and uncongenial living in a restaurant managed by his former servant. But love triumphs over these violent alternations of fortune, and anything else would be unthinkable in so happy and spirited a piece.

The greatest reverses are met with so much gaiety and give so much occasion for song that a theme naturally full of tragedy reveals itself in the skilful hands of Mr. ERIC MASCHWITZ as ideally suited for a superb musical show. It is said to be considered in Hollywood quite essential to have a cabaret scene in any ambitious film. Mr. MASCHWITZ has so arranged matters that singing and bright uniforms arise naturally out of the plot the whole time.

At the beginning the wealthy young officers like nothing better than fancy-dress parties, and at the end a cheerful restaurant in Paris is the obvious resource to which they turn. The singers and dancers appear in the most generous numbers, and they have Mr. WALFORD HYDEN'S Orchestra to accompany them. Their dances, as arranged by Miss JOAN DAVIS—and indeed the whole of LEONTINE SAGAN'S production—draw the fullest advantage from the balancing of colour in movement, and these skilful contrasts continue through a dozen scenes.

In the second scene, during the War years, the action becomes exciting, for the heroine's father, *Professor Marakov* (Mr. ARTHUR HARDY), is a bomb-thrower of the traditional formidable type. Mr. ROGER TREVILLE has much more acting to do as the hero than is common in musical romance. If he is happiest as the gay lover in prosperity it is well within his compass to show his hero on active service and bearing with difficulty the galling indignities of poverty-stricken exile.



LOVE À LA CASANOVA

Nicki . . . . . MR. CLIFFORD MOLLISON
Masha . . . . . MISS BETTY WARREN



THE MAN WHO CAME BACK

Count Peter Karagin. MR. ROGER TREVILLE
Lydia Marakova . . MISS MURIEL ANGELUS

There are some capital character-sketches. Mr. CLIFFORD MOLLISON as *Nicki* might be thought to be rather patently English as a high-spirited batman, but he has so much natural humour that he is an adornment to any country or setting. As *Maniev*, the gipsy restaurant-proprietor, Mr. LEO VON POKORNY is perfectly cast, and his delight in reading the memoirs of CASANOVA is an object-lesson to all bibliophiles. Miss MURIEL ANGELUS plays the heroine with a little constraint, but in a way that admirably suggests her special distinction among all the girls of the Imperial Ballet. Mr. ERIC MARSHALL gives a very finished performance as a Russian Colonel reduced to singing in the Paris streets. We see him later in his earlier authority and are made to feel his quiet capacity. Miss DOROTHY SEACOMBE is excellently impossible as an underbred American tourist.

But it is not for individual performances that the Adelphi will draw the public. *Balalaika* sets and maintains a note of rich profusion in entertainment. It is a great collective display which brings into the modern theatre the breath of a luxurious and high-spirited past. D. W.

"HEART'S CONTENT" (SHAFTESBURY)

How cruelly elusive is the satisfactory Third Act, and what a dangerous piece of construction it can be to put a big time-gap towards the end of an otherwise fairly closely-spaced play! The effect may be the same as it often is when we meet someone again after many years whom we had been beginning to like and know well—time has killed interest, and though a fresh friendship could probably be started up with a little trouble, this seems scarcely worth taking. In a play there is anyway not enough time left for that.

This is one reason, I think, why Mr. W. CHETHAM STRODE'S last Act is so much less vital than his First and Second; and another is that he has allowed such an ellipse in action as well as in time. So much that really matters to them has happened to *Ann*

and *Carl* in the years between that when they meet again they have lost the reality which Mr. STRODE had won for them and become participants in a sort of Epilogue at which we feel mere detached spectators. And this is the sadder because of the promise and sincerity of what has gone before.

The theme of the play is an attempt to decide which of two kinds of love is the better founded: that which is like a slow lowland river, bringing peace and security, or that which, like a wild highland stream, has its occasional placid pools only at the cost of much stormy torrent. (The aquatic metaphor is partly Mr. STRODE'S.) Clearly temperament must be a big and varying factor; and from what we have seen of *Ann* (Miss DIANA WYNYARD) her temperament points more to *Miles*(Mr. CYRIL RAYMOND), who navigates the smooth waters of successful advocacy, than to *Carl* (Mr. LOUIS BORELL), who finishes the Second Act not only about to launch himself in the perilous rapids of revolution but utterly refusing, lest he should be distracted from his patriotic purpose, to let *Ann* help paddle his canoe—a point which she, clinging to an illusion that the woman must come before the job, whatever it may be, obstinately refuses to understand. *Miles* is not half *Carl's* romantic figure, but he is a good sound chap and perfectly ready to put *Ann* first in everything; there is only one obstacle in the way of a happy marriage between these two well-suited people, and that is simply *Ann's* passionate love for *Carl*, with which the Second Act ends.

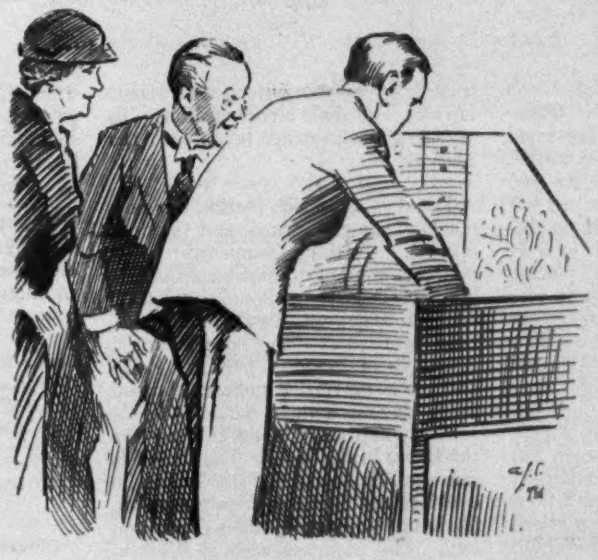
The Third Act tells us very little of how things have happened in the intervening years. All it does is to give us the facts that *Ann* has married *Miles* out of affection rather than love and that *Carl* has become the Foreign Secretary of Austria, and to show how a meeting between him and *Ann* convinces her that she has been wise to embark on the slower waters.

Within the limits of *Ann's* character Miss WYNYARD gives a distinguished and charming performance, but even she cannot bring the close of the play entirely to life; Mr. BORELL'S *Carl* is an admirably balanced sketch; Mr. RAYMOND'S *Miles* has the growing charm of complete reliability; and the minor characters are in safe hands, amongst them those of Miss MARY JERROLD and Mr. O. B. CLARENCE. ERIC.



ATTITUDE OF BEATITUDE

Ann Fenwick . . . . MISS DIANA WYNYARD
Carl von Roden . . . MR. LOUIS BORELL



SIGHTSEEING

Lady Fenwick . . . . . MISS MARY JERROLD
Sir Harry Fenwick, K.C. . . MR. O. B. CLARENCE
Miles Channing . . . . . MR. CYRIL RAYMOND

Mr. Punch recommends to his readers the Gala Variety Performance at Sadler's Wells Theatre on Monday evening, January 11th. They may book tickets (from two guineas to 7/6) at any London agency, or buy an unreserved seat at from *5s.* to *1s.*; they will be entertained by a genuine "All-Star Cast" of stage, film and radio performers; *and* they will be helping the Princess Louise Hospital for Children.

The Catalogue

MOVED by an impulse she cannot resist
Little Miss Pringle is making a list.

"Hyacinths, mixed, say 20.
Then Tulips, *2,000 of those*—
Inglecombe Yellow, El Toreador,
Dream and the Sultan, White Swan and Fred Moore,
Duchess de Parma and Duc Van Thol (rose),
That ought to be plenty.

Anemones (French), 5/6;
And Crocus, White Lady, pure white.
Muscari—bright amethyst blue;
Galanthus Elwesii too
(That's Snowdrops. They would be a sight)
And Iris—they'll mix.

Daffodils, small ones, 'Rounds,'
And Jonquils because of the scent;
Poeticus, 'Horace, pure white, orange cup
Rimmed scarlet'—how lovely!—'from 5/- up—500.' Now, what have I spent?
It's nearly twelve pounds!"

Moved by a longing she cannot resist
Miss Pringle sits making,
In her flat she sits making (making believe)
A list.

At the Play

"BALALAIKA" (ADELPHI)

Balalaika is a musical show, but it has far more than music and colour to it. It is almost a cavalcade of Imperial Russia, and the coming of the Revolution gives excitement and weight to the plot, making it very different from the ordinary slender thread of a musical show.

The wheel goes full circle in the course of the evening as we move from the old Russia of the Tsars, in which *Count Peter Karagin* (Mr. ROGER TREVILLE) is considered too grand to marry *Lydia Marakova* (Miss MURIEL ANGELUS), the ballet-dancer, to post-War Paris, where she is the daughter of the *Soviet Ambassador* and he a penniless White Russian earning a precarious and uncongenial living in a restaurant managed by his former servant. But love triumphs over these violent alternations of fortune, and anything else would be unthinkable in so happy and spirited a piece.

The greatest reverses are met with so much gaiety and give so much occasion for song that a theme naturally full of tragedy reveals itself in the skilful hands of Mr. ERIC MASCHWITZ as ideally suited for a superb musical show. It is said to be considered in Hollywood quite essential to have a cabaret scene in any ambitious film. Mr. MASCHWITZ has so arranged matters that singing and bright uniforms arise naturally out of the plot the whole time.

At the beginning the wealthy young officers like nothing better than fancy-dress parties, and at the end a cheerful restaurant in Paris is the obvious resource to which they turn. The singers and dancers appear in the most generous numbers, and they have Mr. WALFORD HYDEN'S Orchestra to accompany them. Their dances, as arranged by Miss JOAN DAVIS—and indeed the whole of LEONTINE SAGAN'S production—draw the fullest advantage from the balancing of colour in movement, and these skilful contrasts continue through a dozen scenes.

In the second scene, during the War years, the action becomes exciting, for the heroine's father, *Professor Marakov* (Mr. ARTHUR HARDY), is a bomb-thrower of the traditional formidable type. Mr. ROGER TREVILLE has much more acting to do as the hero than is common in musical romance. If he is happiest as the gay lover in prosperity it is well within his compass to show his hero on active service and bearing with difficulty the galling indignities of poverty-stricken exile.



LOVE À LA CASANOVA

Nicki . . . . . MR. CLIFFORD MOLLISON
Masha . . . . . MISS BETTY WARREN



THE MAN WHO CAME BACK

Count Peter Karagin. MR. ROGER TREVILLE
Lydia Marakova . . MISS MURIEL ANGELUS

There are some capital character-sketches. Mr. CLIFFORD MOLLISON as *Nicki* might be thought to be rather patently English as a high-spirited batman, but he has so much natural humour that he is an adornment to any country or setting. As *Maniev*, the gipsy restaurant-proprietor, Mr. LEO VON POKORNY is perfectly cast, and his delight in reading the memoirs of CASANOVA is an object-lesson to all bibliophiles. Miss MURIEL ANGELUS plays the heroine with a little constraint, but in a way that admirably suggests her special distinction among all the girls of the Imperial Ballet. Mr. ERIC MARSHALL gives a very finished performance as a Russian Colonel reduced to singing in the Paris streets. We see him later in his earlier authority and are made to feel his quiet capacity. Miss DOROTHY SEACOMBE is excellently impossible as an underbred American tourist.

But it is not for individual performances that the Adelphi will draw the public. *Balalaika* sets and maintains a note of rich profusion in entertainment. It is a great collective display which brings into the modern theatre the breath of a luxurious and high-spirited past. D. W.

"HEART'S CONTENT" (SHAFTESBURY)

How cruelly elusive is the satisfactory Third Act, and what a dangerous piece of construction it can be to put a big time-gap towards the end of an otherwise fairly closely-spaced play! The effect may be the same as it often is when we meet someone again after many years whom we had been beginning to like and know well—time has killed interest, and though a fresh friendship could probably be started up with a little trouble, this seems scarcely worth taking. In a play there is anyway not enough time left for that.

This is one reason, I think, why Mr. W. CHETHAM STRODE'S last Act is so much less vital than his First and Second; and another is that he has allowed such an ellipse in action as well as in time. So much that really matters to them has happened to *Ann*

and *Carl* in the years between that when they meet again they have lost the reality which Mr. STRODE had won for them and become participants in a sort of Epilogue at which we feel mere detached spectators. And this is the sadder because of the promise and sincerity of what has gone before.

The theme of the play is an attempt to decide which of two kinds of love is the better founded: that which is like a slow lowland river, bringing peace and security, or that which, like a wild highland stream, has its occasional placid pools only at the cost of much stormy torrent. (The aquatic metaphor is partly Mr. STRODE'S.) Clearly temperament must be a big and varying factor; and from what we have seen of *Ann* (Miss DIANA WYNYARD) her temperament points more to *Miles*(Mr. CYRIL RAYMOND), who navigates the smooth waters of successful advocacy, than to *Carl* (Mr. LOUIS BORELL), who finishes the Second Act not only about to launch himself in the perilous rapids of revolution but utterly refusing, lest he should be distracted from his patriotic purpose, to let *Ann* help paddle his canoe—a point which she, clinging to an illusion that the woman must come before the job, whatever it may be, obstinately refuses to understand. *Miles* is not half *Carl's* romantic figure, but he is a good sound chap and perfectly ready to put *Ann* first in everything; there is only one obstacle in the way of a happy marriage between these two well-suited people, and that is simply *Ann's* passionate love for *Carl*, with which the Second Act ends.

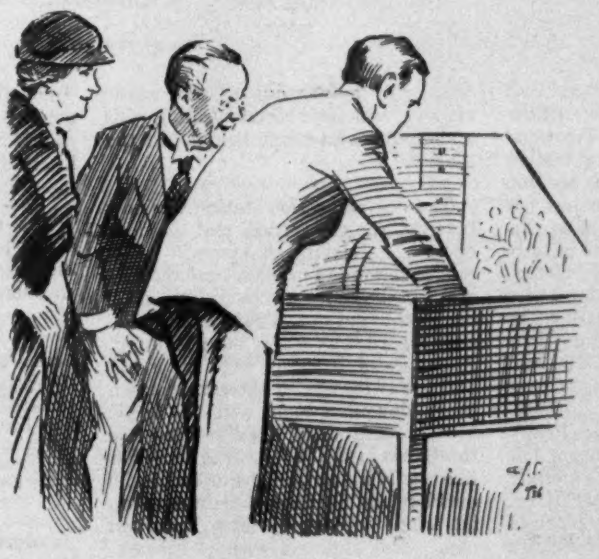
The Third Act tells us very little of how things have happened in the intervening years. All it does is to give us the facts that *Ann* has married *Miles* out of affection rather than love and that *Carl* has become the Foreign Secretary of Austria, and to show how a meeting between him and *Ann* convinces her that she has been wise to embark on the slower waters.

Within the limits of *Ann's* character Miss WYNYARD gives a distinguished and charming performance, but even she cannot bring the close of the play entirely to life; Mr. BORELL'S *Carl* is an admirably balanced sketch; Mr. RAYMOND'S *Miles* has the growing charm of complete reliability; and the minor characters are in safe hands, amongst them those of Miss MARY JERROLD and Mr. O. B. CLARENCE. ERIC.



ATTITUDE OF BEATITUDE

Ann Fenwick . . . . MISS DIANA WYNYARD
Carl von Roden. . . . MR. LOUIS BORELL



SIGHTSEEING

Lady Fenwick. . . . . MISS MARY JERROLD
Sir Harry Fenwick, K.C. . . MR. O. B. CLARENCE
Miles Channing . . . . . MR. CYRIL RAYMOND

Mr. Punch recommends to his readers the Gala Variety Performance at Sadler's Wells Theatre on Monday evening, January 11th. They may book tickets (from two guineas to 7/6) at any London agency, or buy an unreserved seat at from 5*s.* to 1*s.*; they will be entertained by a genuine "All-Star Cast" of stage, film and radio performers; *and* they will be helping the Princess Louise Hospital for Children.

The Catalogue

MOVED by an impulse she cannot resist
Little Miss Pringle is making a list.

"Hyacinths, mixed, say 20.
Then Tulips, *2,000 of those*—
Inglecombe Yellow, El Toreador,
Dream and the Sultan, White Swan and Fred Moore,
Duchess de Parma and Duc Van Thol (rose),
That ought to be plenty.

Anemones (French), 5/6;
And Crocus, White Lady, pure white.
Muscari—bright amethyst blue;
Galanthus Elwesii too
(That's Snowdrops. They would be a sight)
And Iris—they'll mix.

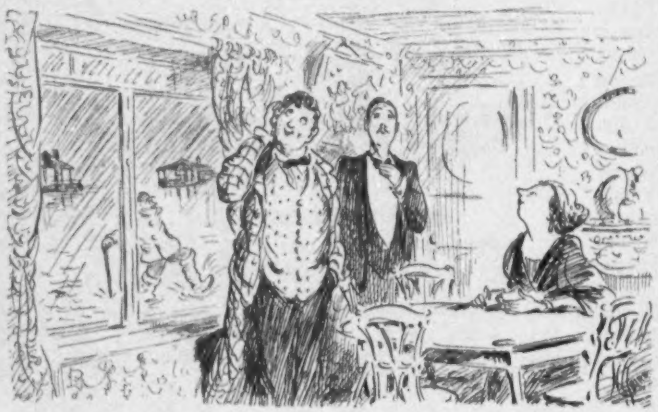
Daffodils, small ones, 'Rounds,'
And Jonquils because of the scent;
Poeticus, 'Horace, pure white, orange cup
Rimmed scarlet'—how lovely!—'from 5/- up—500.' Now, what have I spent?
It's nearly twelve pounds!"

Moved by a longing she cannot resist
Miss Pringle sits making,
In her flat she sits making (making believe)
A list.

Close of a Gamp

THE Tuan in his latest letter wants to know if there isn't a bit of poetry about the ape and the tiger. He has been demobilising his monkeys.

The Tuan, who writes so seldom that I sometimes doubt his existence, lives on an estate close to a charmingly horrible jungle (with tigers), somewhere past the road to Mandalay. He keeps semi-regal state, enjoying all the amenities standardised by King SOLOMON, excluding the harem, but including apes and peacocks. (He does not keep tigers. He has an anti-tiger complex. He used to keep pigs, but he found that the glad tidings of free pork was passing rapidly through the underworld of the jungle, until every tiger in Malay was licking its lips and loping towards his estate. In fact one night he found a queue of tigers waiting to raid his pigs—old tigers who could remember what pork tasted like in '06, middle-aged tigers confessing to one another with a smirk that pork was really too rich for them but it was a poor heart that never rejoiced, young tigers who wanted to taste pork, if only so that they could deride the diet of their elders. He gave up keeping pigs then.) He had five apes—Mr. and Mrs. Gamp, Betsy Trotwood, Oliver Twist and Snodgrass. Betsy Trotwood was a maiden aunt of uncertain temper—gruffish, and came down on you sharp. Mrs. Gamp liked to put her lips to a bottle when she felt so disposed, and when in liquor she exactly resembled the original in the picture of the famous tea-party. Gamp also lived up to his name, barring the wooden leg. He had knocked out four of his wife's teeth. Oliver Twist and Snodgrass were their offspring. Oliver Twist needs no explanation. Snodgrass was always announcing loudly that he was just going to begin but he never did begin, being generally knocked silly by a cuff from his father. Altogether a quintet best admired from a distance, as all the houseboys agreed.



"AH! HERE COMES MAURICE. I KNOW HIM BY HIS SPLASH."

For reasons of state it was decided to demobilise the monkeys. Of course they might have been liquidated, and if the houseboys' advice had been taken they would have been. However, the Tuan commanded that they should be enlarged in the jungle, where they would have an opportunity of working off their inhibitions on members of their own clan. A portable cage was pushed up to their enclosure and baited with bananas. The youngsters fell at once, and their aunt soon followed. Mrs. Gamp was not far behind, but Gamp's superiority complex held him back until he realised that parity in bananas was becoming impossible, when with a howl of rage he rushed in like *Orlando* on the feasting family. During the scrimmage the door was shut and the cage hoisted on to the back of a car. The monkeys found the journey delightful. They must have got the same kick out of it that trippers get out of the scenic railway, and their blood-curdling yells and frantic clutchings heightened the illusion.

The demobilisation station was now reached, the car turned, and the door opened. Nothing happened. The monkeys were of opinion that the ride had not been long enough, and they declined to get out. Prods with a stick they regarded as vulgar but not funny. A couple of bananas were flung out and the twins hurled themselves upon them, devoured them with the speed of light, and stood hand-in-hand like the Babes in the Wood. The Tuan felt like the Wicked Uncle, but before he could relent Gamp suddenly spat on his hands and threw Betsy Trotwood out. She alighted with a squawk, perceived a tree and knew that it was a good monkey's duty to climb it. But she had forgotten the technique. Halfway up she looked down and lost her nerve. It gave her such a turn that she slid down screeching, fell the last ten feet and gave herself up to contralto lament. At this moment the Tuan let the clutch in with a bang, and Mr. and Mrs. Gamp, who had been enjoying the performance from the circle, so to speak, were shot into the pit. Gamp remained, uttering frightful oaths. Mrs. Gamp, remembering that in the jungle there are neither bottles nor chimney-pieces to put them on, gave chase. But she was not built for speed. Half-a-mile away the Tuan pulled up and listened. Down in the forest something stirred. It was Gamp setting about his wife.

The Second Act followed almost immediately. Next morning Gamp appeared, an unbidden guest, at the door of the food cupboard. (You remember the original *Gamp* had a weakness for walking into wine and spirit vaults and not coming out till fetched by force.) Finding his vision obstructed by the rear elevation of a houseboy, he leapt on to the back of the boy and began to chew his face off. The Tuan came running with weapons, under the impression that pirates had landed, and the monkey retired to the roof and ate a biscuit in a lofty manner. Later on two dogs turned in with their faces chewed, and the Tuan, thinking that the play had now gone far enough, ordered that one should bring his gun. Presently Gamp, in addition to being demobilised, was disembodied.

The Tuan wants to know if there isn't a bit of poetry about the ape and the tiger. He feels that he could add an illuminating footnote. W. G.

Better and Brighter Christmas-Cards

"This year Mr. and Mrs. Ormond Lawson Johnston have not sent out a photograph of their house in Cadogan-place with them on the balcony, as they did last year. Instead their card has a view of the Mappin Terraces at the Zoo."—*Gossip Column.*

"SOUTHERN: Over 2,500 reservations have been made, including 4,000 at Victoria Station. One hundred extra expresses will run to-day and to-morrow."

Daily Paper.

Including 150 yesterday?

The Unintelligent Woman's Pocket Guide to Conversation

The Listening Expression

THIS constitutes the first move towards becoming known as a conversationalist of note. Raptness should be the keynote of the face. The eyes should be wide, questioning and unwandering, the lips (if the teeth are good) slightly apart, and it is permissible, should the conversation take place at table, to rest an elbow thereon, cup the chin in the palm, and completely to forget the peach on your plate so enthralling is your neighbour's account of just what *did* happen at the Battle of Jutland. Verbal eloquence on your own part should be confined to breathless ejaculations, such as "And then, Admiral?" "Yes," and "Oh, my goodness!"

The Talking Expression

There are two kinds of women: those who are looked at when they are talking and those who are listened to when they are talking. If you belong to the former category the play of facial muscles accompanying the following remarks (all you will find necessary) should be rigorously practised and disciplined before a looking-glass in the privacy of your own demesne: "Tell, me, Eric——" "What do you think, Mr. Brown?" "How is your neuritis, Major Stiff?" If to the latter, the expression is almost invariably of little import.

What to Talk About

Mistakenly regarded as the runt among conversational topics, the weather is actually *without equal* as an opening for popularity-increasing chat. Mention the (*a*) trying winds, (*b*) trying cold, (*c*) trying heat, to your companion and your work is done. You have now merely to assume the Listening Expression (*see above*) and sit back; and the dowager will confide in you her experiences when she was ill-advised enough to cast a clout prematurely; the mother, the effects of (*a*), (*b*) and (*c*) on little Magnus's constitution; the young man on his car; the maiden on her young man; the novelist on his critic's critical faculties; the actress on her audience's intellect. And everybody knows that reference to a hint of thunder in the air always jogs the Colonel's memory about that pig-sticking record he put up in '03.

Universal Opinion upon the Woman who has Assumed the Listening Expression and Sat Back:—

"Mighty intelligent girl, Miss Sharp."

Remarks Guaranteed to Please—

"Ah, but then you're an epicure, Sir Joshua."

"I must have your advice, Susan, about these flapjack hats." (Susan's taste notwithstanding.)

"You're so clever at explaining, Mr. Smith. Now just exactly what is a 'scrum'?"

Remarks Guaranteed not to Please—

"Why, you remember LEWIS WALLER, Gladys!"

"I adore your finger-bowls, darling. *What!* But, my dear, you've been stung. Woolworths have got the same thing."

"Are you a Blackshirt, Mr. Greenberg?"

And Always Remember Dr. FULLER's advice:—

"Make not thy own Person, Family, Relations or Affairs the frequent Subject of thy Tattle. . . . Say not: My Manner and Custom is to do thus. I neither drink nor eat in the Morning. I am apt to be troubled with Corns. My Child said such a Witty Thing last night."



EMPTY SADDLES

Unromantic Sister. "HUM! FOR ONE WHO HAS PROBABLY NEVER RIDDEN ANYTHING HE SEEMS TO FEEL IT TERRIBLY."

The Library

At the moment I cannot ask casual callers to step for a moment into my library because as soon as they passed through the door they would do so only too literally, stepping not merely into the library but into the books themselves, most of which lie in piles on the floor. The reason that they lie in piles on the floor is not merely that I have not yet had time to arrange them on the shelves, but that there are not any shelves left on which to arrange them. Some men develop a craving for wine and some for tobacco, but my craving is for books, and one day I propose to have an enormous room completely surrounded by shelves completely filled with books. At the moment my library is housed in a tiny closet-like apartment where anything like orderly arrangement is impossible.

On the face of it this would appear to be unfortunate, but it has one great advantage: it enables me to foil the book-borrower and at the same time to preserve my character for genial benevolence. Brown, for instance, called round the other day with the hungry look in his eyes that betokens the book-borrower.

"Can you lend me an Italian dictionary, old man?" he said.

Had I been in possession of the library of my dreams I should have been forced (*a*) To refer to my catalogue, lend him the book, and be for the rest of my days *minus* an Italian dictionary; or (*b*) Refuse to lend him my Italian dictionary until he had returned volume ii. of *The Greville Memoirs*, which would have seemed churlish; or (*c*) Tell him that I had no Italian dictionary, which would have been a lie and therefore (according to Henry Hall) a sin. But with my books arranged in my closet-library the procedure is simplified.

"An Italian dictionary?" I said bluffly. "Of course I shall be only too delighted, old boy, to lend you an Italian dictionary. Would you prefer a big red one or a little green one?"

"The small one will do," said Brown.

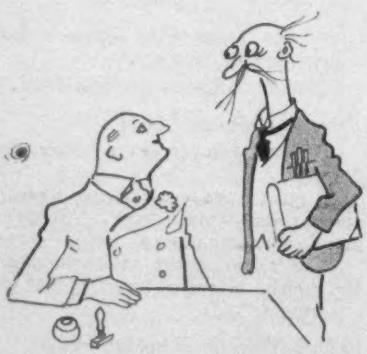
Then I took him to the library door and pushed him gently in, taking care that he fell over the eight volumes of *Harmsworth's Universal Encyclopædia* which were perched on top of a rather nice but very large *Life of Sir Walter Scott*.

"I'm not sure *exactly* where the dictionaries are," I said, "but just make yourself at home and have a good look. I'll go and smoke a cigar in the study and come back presently and see how you are getting on."

And of course Brown never found an Italian dictionary, and equally of course he had several narrow escapes from death when high towers of books suddenly collapsed and fell about him. I bandaged the worst of his wounds and brushed the more obvious dust from his clothes, but somehow I feel that he will not come borrowing again until my dream-library comes true.

Apart from the books I have already several of the appurtenances of a first-class library, including two sets of library steps which I bought at a sale. I think there can be few grander feelings than to own a library so high that one needs a pair of steps to reach the upper shelves. At the moment we are obliged to keep the steps out in the garden, and by the time I need them for the purpose for which they were intended they will probably be so rotten that I shall only keep them for the use of book-borrowing Browns and get a new pair for myself.

But in my dream-library I am not going to make the same mistake as a friend of mine who came into a fortune and had all his books bound exactly alike in red leather. The agony that man suffers through all his books looking exactly alike can hardly be exaggerated. The other night he sank back in his bath with what he thought was the second volume of *The Last Chronicle of Barset* and nearly swooned when he found it was *The Voyage of The Beagle*. He is constantly packing the wrong books to take on long railway journeys and is seriously thinking of having the whole lot rebound in stripes of different colours, with volume ii. of anything done in spots as an additional safeguard.



"You must pull me up if I call you Shrimpson again."

The Tavern Brawl

We strolled along the Canebière at night.

"Marseilles," stated Ferdinand, "takes on her true aspect by night, out of the tourist season."

"Knives," I suggested, "and a choking gurgle in the noisome alley."

"The black waters of the harbour close over yet another corpse," hissed Laura.

"You can joke," said Ferdinand, annoyed, "but I know for a fact that there are more unsolved murders every year in Marseilles than in all the other French cities put together. It's partly a racial problem."

There was certainly a varied selection of nationalities along the waterfront, with its tangled masts black against the coloured lights.

My wife stopped outside the lowest-looking café in sight.

"Here we are," she announced. "I'll have a grenadine. I don't know what it is, but it sounds exciting."

"Fortunately it's non-alcoholic," I told her, leading the way in.

The café was full of French and German sailors.

"It's after eleven," muttered Ferdinand. "Anything might happen in a place like this."

"It's all right," whispered Laura; "you're armed, aren't you?"

My brother-in-law blushed. He had a Boy Scout knife slung from his belt.

We sipped our drinks and waited for the inevitable affray. After a dull five minutes two of the German sailors had a momentary dispute as to which of them should feed the café canary. Nothing came of it, however, and we passed on.

My wife led us into a still lower café.

"Look here," protested Ferdinand, "you might hear some frightful language."

"I don't care. I want to see someone knifed."

"Ferdinand, forward!" I said.

"Ssh! Look!" he replied.

A huge negro of repellent aspect had thrust open the door and stood swaying on the threshold. Then he lurched into the room and advanced with cat-like stealth towards a broad-shouldered American sailor who was standing at the bar with his back towards the negro.

"G-get ready to g-go," muttered Ferdinand jerkily.

The negro suddenly clapped his hands over the American's eyes and shouted "Guess who?"



"I'LL FIND IT, LADY, RIGHT ENOUGH. I'VE NEVER BIN ANYWHERE BUT WOT I 'AVEN'T BIN ABLE TO FIND IT."

"Wal," returned the sailor, twisting round, "if it isn't Bob Washington!"

We left them embracing.

The third café Laura found for us was positively sinister. It contained every shade of negro, besides Italians, Frenchmen, and a Chinese selling braces. There was music and much shouting.

Ferdinand took a seat near the door.

A group of men at the bar who were arguing loudly over a newspaper eyed us with interest as we ordered drinks, and almost at once one of them came towards us newspaper in hand.

He was a most depraved-looking sailor of uncertain race with a horrible squint. He advanced straight on Ferdinand, pushed the paper under my brother-in-law's nose, and demanded something in a hoarse voice out of a haze of garlic.

Ferdinand stiffened, and I swear his hand crept towards the Boy Scout knife.

The sailor tapped his paper and repeated the question in a louder tone.

Ferdinand closed his eyes and stood up.

Anything might have happened, but I had managed to grasp the question.

"D-A-M-N," I spelled slowly, intervening.

"Merci, m'sieu, merci!" said the sailor, and left us.

Ferdinand opened his eyes.

"W-what was it?" he gasped.

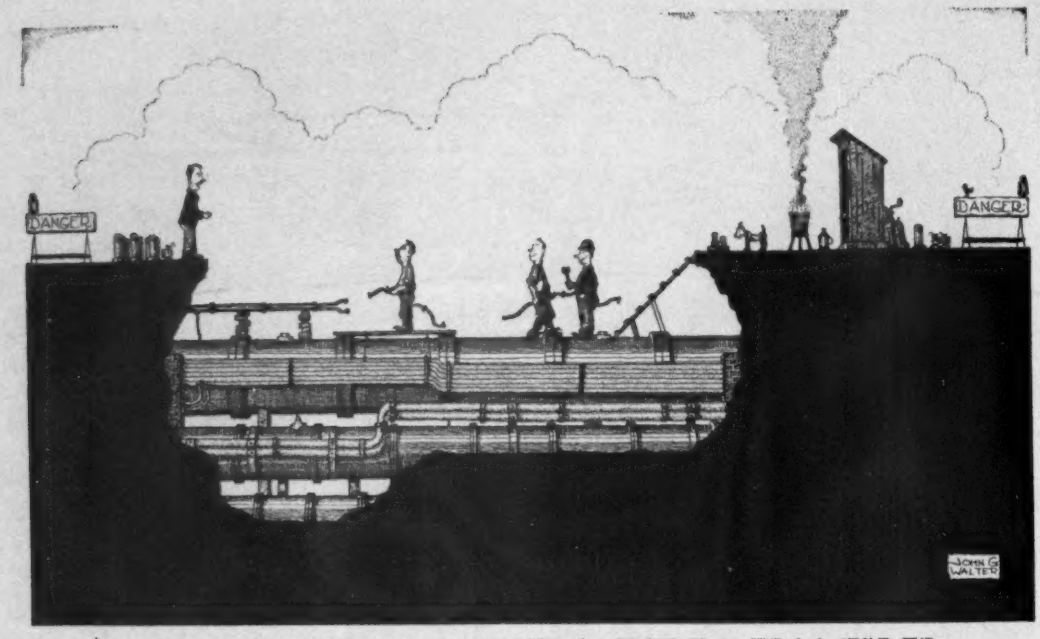
"Number Seven Across, 'English expletive in four letters,'" I explained.

"It's partly a racial problem," murmured Laura.

"His only weakness is his stomach. It is said that he can eat a whole goat with the ease and quickness with which an ordinary individual eats his dinner."

Sunday Paper.

Reader, would *you* call his stomach weak?



"BUT YOU MUST HAVE MIXED UP SOMETHING, BECAUSE WHEN MY WIFE TURNED ON THE GAS STOVE THE KITCHEN WAS IMMEDIATELY FLOODED OUT WITH WATER."

A New Year Letter to the Secretary of a Golf Club

From John Baggs, Caddie-Master, Roughover Golf Club.

2/1/37.

MR. WHILK, DEAR SIR,—Well, Sir, I have now got the list of all them pencil marks, signs and scratches which the caddies here puts on players' golf bags after they is done with them, so that caddies on other courses know what they is up against afore they start.

But Sir, it was a chronic job getting it all and no mistake, for I had to give Alf Humpitt, our Senior Caddie, six bottles of stout afore he would part with the information required; and, Sir, I hope you will reimburse yours truly for same *plus* nine more bottles drunk by me, Alf insisting I keep time with him.

Well, Sir, this is—

THE LIST

▽ Bark worse than bite.

▽ Bite worse than bark—needs watching.

$\frac{3}{4}$ Powerful Cheater, specially in Competitions, but tips well if you doesnt notice.

You should count balls in bag afore you goes out and inform him of number as he will always say he has more than what he is entitled to at the end.

Carrys on like Hitler only worse.

Squeaky boots, sniffing and seagulls near drives him detrimental.

You should always keep a rag for to wipe ball free of mud—if you dont he will rub same in your hair.

Steals his opponents tees.

Keep out of striking distance when he is 2 down or when his ball is lost.

Scotch.

Never speaks the truth.

Calls a spade a shovel and his clubs something worse.

If he tells you for to kneel down for to tie up his shoe lace dont do it as it is only for to get you in that position for to give you a rare kicking for to work off his temper.

⊙ Sees things what isnt there.

Likes driving into herds of sheep or cattle (short range) but prefers womens foursomes.

Note.—Where "he" is mentioned read also "she."

Well, Sir, although the above is all new to me it must be O K for I checked up the list with the signs on members bags this A.M. and Sir it must be right for Admiral Charles Sneyring-Stymie and Mr. Lionel Nutmeg has nearly every single one on their bags, and so has General Sir Armstrong Forcursue; but the latter has seven more Alf never told me about, including this:—



Trusting the above information will be of some use to you for coping with visitors afore they copes with you.

Yours obedient servant,

JOHN BAGGS,
Caddie-Master.

G. C. N.

A Demonstration

It was a Demonstration Day in Cairo. There was nothing particular to demonstrate about, but it was a hot airless morning and the students in one of the Secondary Schools, having found their examination-papers beyond their powers, had downed books and gone into the street yelling for "Independence." This is a very understandable feeling when one is seventeen, the class-room is stuffy and the papers difficult, but few youths have the luck to be born in a country where one can strike without being struck in return.

On hearing the well-known cry, "*Yehia el Istiklal!*" ("Long live Independence!") all the schools and universities in the vicinity closed down for the day and the usual excited mob of youths and boys flocked into the streets and, according to custom, smashed every street-lamp on their route and overturned a tramcar, making rude gestures to the mildly-protesting police.

The boot-blacks, lottery-ticket-sellers and cigarette-end-collectors, hearing the outcry and hoping for broken shop-windows and possibly loot, gathered to swell the mob, which, yelling frantically and with no set purpose in view, started to rush across Kasr-el-Nil Bridge. The cry of "Down with the English!" inspired by the sight of the Union Jack on the Consulate, had now been substituted for that of "Long live Independence!" and the change met with instant approval.

"Down with the English!" they yelled, waving sticks and fragments of iron railings, and then, trudging stolidly across the bridge to meet them, came six men and a corporal of His Majesty's Foot Guards. They were returning from night-duty at the residence of the Commander-in-Chief, and the N.C.O. in charge was fully acquainted with his orders, which, to be brief, were to march his charge straight back to barracks, halt them in the square, ask permission of the Adjutant to dismiss, and then go in search of dinners. Not a word had been said about demonstrations and rioters, and so demonstrations and rioters of course did not exist. Moreover they barred the way to dining-rooms and dinners, and so the small party, their eyes fixed on an imaginary point six feet from their noses, marched steadily on.

The demonstrators halted and yelled excitedly. In reply to their shouts of "Down with the English!" a small party of English soldiers had inopportunely appeared and were marching towards them. The situation called for some action—something must be done to justify the position, but what? The British soldiers were singularly unhelpful and impolite at this stage, for they never even saw the mob. With a steady left-right, left-right, they tramped across the bridge, their eyes fixed and unseeing, and the hesitating rioters opening ranks to let them pass they went stolidly on until they swung in through the gateway of the barracks.

The mob closed in again, sullen, discomfited, silent. This unilateral disregard of a serious state of affairs that should have been obvious to both parties had created a situation from which it was difficult to emerge with dignity and credit; and then a budding diplomat in their ranks suddenly arrived at the only possible formula to suit the occasion. "Up with the English!" he yelled excitedly. As one man the mob took up the cry, adding of their own accord, "*Yehia el Asakar Ingleez!*" ("Long live the British Soldiers!") and honour was satisfied.

C. S. J.



Taximan. "I 'LL HAVE A JOB FINDIN' THE OTHER SIXPENCE CHANGE FOR YER."
Caledonian. "AH, WEEL, THE NICHT 'S YOUNG."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks.)

A Child's History of the English People

WHAT with modern warfare and the inhuman preponderance of specialists, technicians and æsthetes, the great god Progress is beginning to look nearly as absurd on his pedestal as CALIGULA'S horse. But there is no other deity—on a purely natural hypothesis—to replace him in history-books for the young, unless you turn to the gory super-state of well-brought-up little Germans and Italians. *A History of English Life* (METHUEN, 8/6)—written, I gather, for the middle-aged child—sets out to relate the social evolution of our countrymen from the cave to the "functional" flat. Its authors, Mrs. AMABEL WILLIAMS-ELLIS and F. J. FISHER, adopt a popular manner towards their not very clearly visualised *Little Arthur*. Their matter is distinctly stiff and the diagrams used to elucidate it stiffer. I own myself to entertaining serious doubts as to the feasibility of interesting children in the race. The book's interpolated biographies, from ALFRED and THOMAS MORE to ROBERT OWEN and JOHN BURNS, are far more attractive than its gilded statistics; and its real pictures—above all, those of the houses of our unmechanised ancestors—far more illuminating than its graphs and charts.

Mr. Baring Opens His Baggage.

Seeing himself on the far side of Styx with the miscellaneous spoil of a literary life among his luggage, Mr. MAURICE BARING imagines himself greeted with *Have You Anything to Declare?* (HEINEMANN, 8/6)—and here is the answer he makes to the *douanier* of *Dis*. Greek, Latin, French, German, Spanish, Russian and English have gone to swell the hoard, and the hoarder has ransacked his own wits—and those of his friends—to furnish translations. HEREDIA and Mr. GLADSTONE collaborate over HORACE; Monsignor KNOX renders a Latin fragment by GRAY; a very youthful SWINBURNE magnificently copes with the *Dies Iræ*. Throughout there is critical comment on this choice or that, and the light-hearted change of posture of a traveller too sure of his place to sit tight in it. Foreign opinion wholesomely checks the vagaries of domestic fashion: Mr. BARING stands up for MAUPASSANT, PROUST for GEORGE ELIOT. You can dip into an inimitable bedside book or deduce half-a-dozen morals from its cumulative doctrine. Here are two that my own experience endorses: that "the great artists are all contemporaries" (LIONEL JOHNSON), and that "it is private life that governs the world" (DISRAELI).



"THE DOCTOR SAYS IT'S A NEGLECTED COLD."

Well-Trodden Tracks

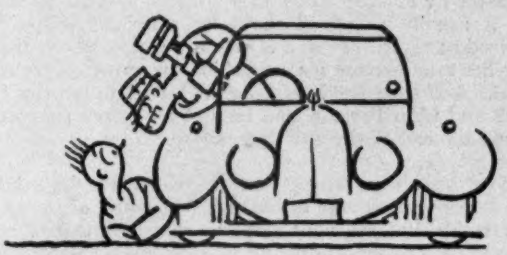
To read on the cover of a new book the name of Mr. R. H. BRUCE LOCKHART, who boarded the funicular to fame with his *Memoirs of a British Agent*, is to have one's pleasurable expectations aroused. This time, however, instead of being a condemned foreigner in wildest Russia, he is a private traveller making a short and rather conventional tour of selected East Indies. Unfortunately the last ten years have produced hundreds of books of varying quality on this particular region, so that *Return to Malaya* (PUTNAM, 12/6) scarcely caters for a long-felt want. The author notes the changes which have occurred in the last twenty-seven years and discusses generously enough the political and racial questions involved, but he adds very little that can be called new. Here and there occur passages of personal and human interest which recall the *Memoirs* both in style and vividness, but these are fewer than I had hoped. I am quite disturbed about it.

Mountains and Mankind

Sir FRANCIS YOUNGHUSBAND in a foreword states that anyone who reads *After Everest* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 18/-) will want "to do all the good that is in him to do." It is truly said, for if Mr. T. HOWARD SOMERVELL'S book lacks literary distinction it is conspicuously noteworthy for its sincerity and call to service. Mr. SOMERVELL, as those of us who are interested in mountaineering know, took part in two attempts to conquer Everest, and his accounts of these expeditions are the more effective because they are simply and straightforwardly told: without graces perhaps, but equally without pretentiousness. Then in 1923 he joined the South Travancore Medical Mission, the centre of which is the hospital at Neyyoor, and from that day to this he has devoted his skill and energy to the relief of physical and spiritual suffering among Indian natives. Perhaps his most significant chapter is "The Hope for India," but every word that he has written on a vast and vexed problem is suggestive. From personal experience, gained by constant and sometimes terrifying work, he has a message to give, and nobody who believes that Christianity is founded on kindness can afford to neglect it.

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Charivaria



MUCH too frequently, remarks a magistrate, motorists consider that pedestrians are beneath them. And much too frequently, of course, they are.

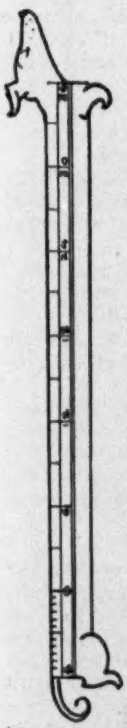
* * *

A philatelist asks for a way to ensure the safety of a jealously-guarded stamp collection. He might try putting it behind the bars at a post-office.

* * *

According to one writer, something should be done to bring out the average person's hidden talents. In addition, that is, to the splendid efforts already being made by the Commissioners of Inland Revenue.

* * *



A correspondent in a contemporary wants to know which is the best yard dog. We suggest the dachshund.

* * *

By means of X-rays it will now be possible to read a newspaper through the human body, instead of over the human shoulder as heretofore.

* * *

It is claimed by a German scholar that fear of poverty has been responsible for much of the world's finest fiction. Income-tax assessors are inclined to consider this an understatement.

* * *

It is said that a stocking round the face will relieve neuralgia. It is also said that a sock on the jaw will not.

* * *

It is pointed out that many traffic-regulating ideas now officially adopted were originally unofficially introduced by road-users themselves. For instance, cycling errand-boys made use of the roundabout a long time before it was actually invented.

Recently a man changed his will no fewer than eight times in as many weeks. His relatives now probably refer to him as the "fresh heir fiend."

* * *

A woman-writer mentions that there are many quaint old superstitions attached to engagement-rings. One of these is that they usually foreshadow a marriage.

* * *

"Wide open spaces have a definite attraction for many people." That is no doubt what makes diaries so popular.

* * *

A naturalist says that a female hippopotamus will close her eyes when drinking at a forest pool. Apparently the reflection of a female hippopotamus is alarming even to a female hippopotamus.



* * *

"The stork has a particularly long bill," observes a naturalist. Every young father knew that.

* * *

"The artistic colony is now drifting to Bloomsbury and may settle down there," writes a critic. Having first settled up at Chelsea, we hope.

* * *

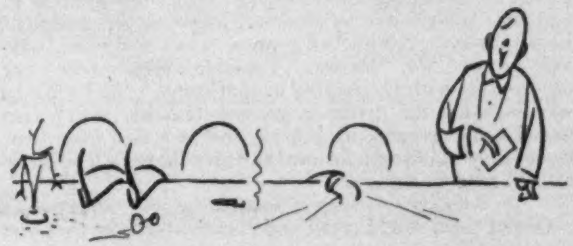
A gossip-writer tells us that, out of nine fellow-passengers in a Park Lane bus, eight were busily engaged making entries in notebooks. Perhaps they were gossip-writers too.

* * *

"Some women haven't a mind beyond the making of woollen jumpers," declares a speaker. Just knitwits.

* * *

The star orator at a banquet, we are told, should speak after the others have finished. But not, if possible, after he has finished himself.



Spain

WHATEVER troops—from want of care
Or else because their natural spleen
Caused them to count it only fair
Not to non-intervene—

Whatever troops in divers clothes
Dictators hurled across the sea,
Breaking the spirits of their oaths
(That is how gents agree),

When they have fought on Spanish soil
And helped to strike down Spanish youth
For "isms" or for olive-oil,
Copper or steel or truth,

This much we hope, not greatly cheered
By German or by Soviet gun,
That when the smoke of battle 's cleared
And all the lying 's done,

After long labour and much pain,
Broken by feud and torn with doubt,
The land shall prove herself again
And cast these aliens out. EVOE.

Robin Hood and Maid Marion

ONCE upon a time there was a garage proprietor called Mr. Robin Hood who kept a petrol- and repair-station on the main road just outside Bilbury. And all day long the sound of his merry men's voices could be heard raised in song as they hammered away at other people's cars.

Sometimes there would come a great shout of honest laughter as one of them accidentally spilled a can of oil over the upholstery of an expensive limousine, and sometimes they would all gather round for a quiet game of noughts and crosses with their greasy fingers on the coach-work. And at other times—for they were interested in their work—they would carry out tests to see whether you really could break the steering-gear of someone else's car merely by wrenching at it violently. And occasionally, if all other amusements failed, they would put their feet up on the cushions and go to sleep. So the long hours flew past as if by magic, and there was never a dull moment in the garage.

But Mr. Robin Hood himself was a tall, thin, lugubrious man who never smiled. And he made his living as an outlaw by preying on the merchant princes of Bilbury as they drove into business every morning from their sumptuous mansions outside the town. Whenever a car stopped outside his garage for petrol Mr. Hood would come lounging up to it, and after he had stubbed out his cigarette on the paintwork he would say gloomily, "I suppose you know your back-axle's loose?" or, "My word, I wouldn't care to take a car on the road with its steering in that state!" And while he was engaging the driver in conversation his merry men would come creeping up behind, and at a sign from their leader they would rush forward and give the car a few simple tests in road-worthiness.

One of them would crawl underneath and show that you only had to unscrew a few nuts for the whole of the bottom of the engine to drop out. And another would test the wheels by hitting them with a heavy sledge-hammer—and it was surprising how few apparently sound cars could pass this test. And a third would show the rotten state of the radiator by kicking a hole in it with his hob-nailed boots. So it usually happened that any merchant prince who arrived at the garage in a car went away in Robin Hood's derelict taxi, leaving his car behind for an expensive overhaul. And then Robin Hood would send out to the Elite Fish and Chip Parlour, and he and his merry men would spend the rest of the day in feasting and song.

So it wasn't surprising that Mr. Hood was regarded as the terror and scourge of the rich merchants of the neighbourhood. But the poor and the oppressed looked up to him as their natural protector and guardian. Many a time he would invite whole parties of them to drive out with him into the country in one of the cars that had been left at his garage; and he never minded how far they went because the petrol was always charged up to the owner of the car. And if some of the kiddies in the party happened to spill jam all over the cushions he would be the first to tell them that it didn't matter at all.

Many too were the thoughtful little gifts he would make to the poor. He would give them flower-vases made out of the odd pistons which he usually had left over after he had finished putting a rich man's car together; and any poor man who needed any sort of a tool was always welcome to come and help himself from the rich men's tool-kits.

Well, one morning, as Mr. Hood was lying in wait outside his garage, who should come driving up but Miss Marion Jones, the maiden lady from the top of the lane. She had just bought herself a new and shiny little car about the size and shape of a tin bath; and after she had stopped it by running into the back of Mr. Hood's taxi she came running excitedly towards him. "Oh, Mr. Hood," she said, giggling a little, "I've just bought a new car and I don't know anything at all about driving it. I am sure I shall run over someone before long; it seems to go so fast."

"Ah, it wants a proper overhaul, that's what it wants," said Mr. Hood, kicking the paintwork reflectively.

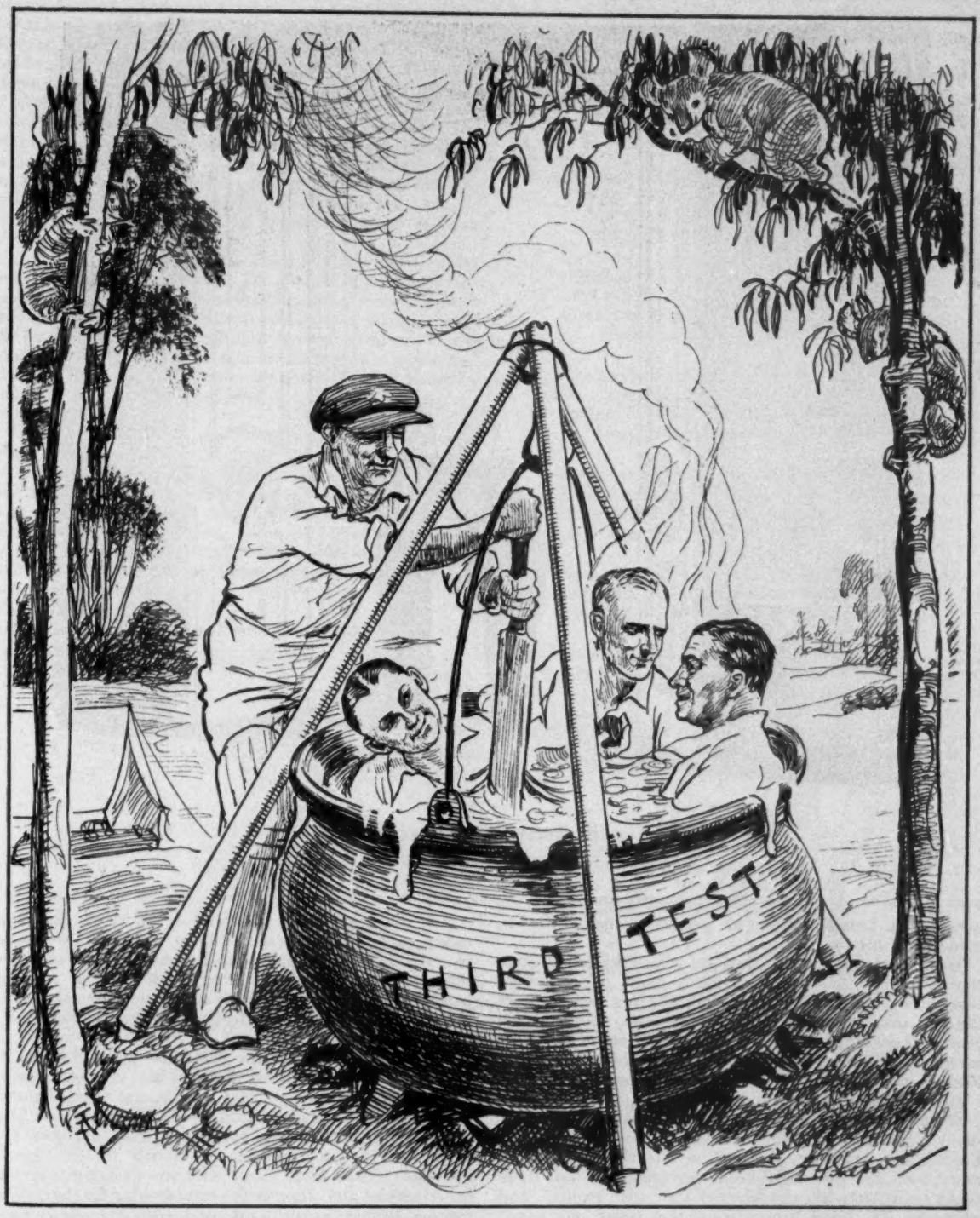
"Oh, Mr. Hood, you know such a lot about motor-cars," said the Maid Marion admiringly, "do you think you would have time to look at my teeny-weeny little car and make it safe for a silly girl like me to drive?"

"Ah! I might," said Mr. Hood. And it wasn't often that anyone gave him an invitation like that; so he made up a long list of expensive things that would have to be done before he could honestly say that the car was safe to drive, and the Maid Marion agreed to them all enthusiastically.

"And, what's more," she said, "I'm going to come and help. I shall be able to hold the screwdrivers and things and make you all a nice cup of tea while you are working; and then I shall know all about motor-cars by the time you have finished. But you mustn't let your great big men laugh at a poor little girl who is only trying to help."

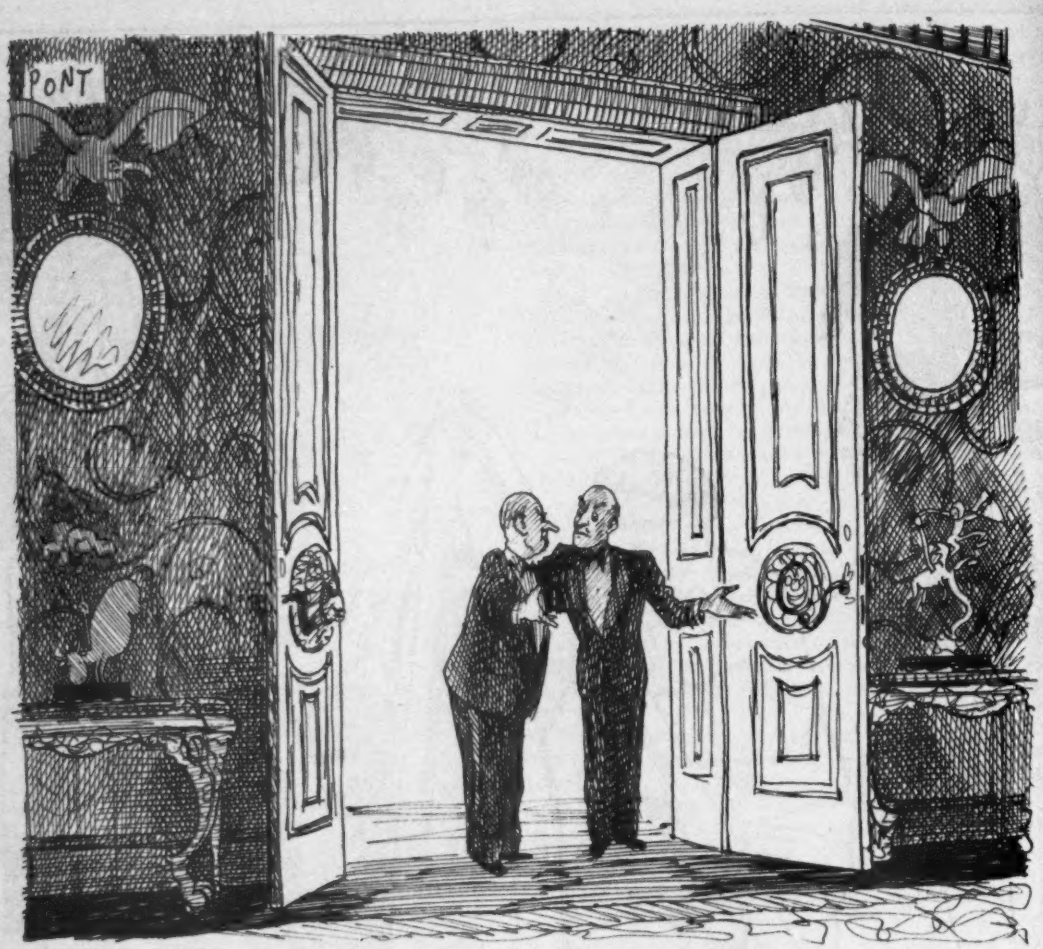
Well, Mr. Hood didn't quite like the sound of that, but he reckoned that he could always add a bit more on to the bill, so he didn't say anything against it. And his eyes glistened at the thought of being able to pull a brand-new motor-car to pieces. So it was wheeled into the garage and the merry men set to work, flinging bits of it about in all directions and carolling joyfully as they did so.

But the next morning the Maid Marion turned up at the



KANGAROO-TAIL SOUP

CHEF BRADMAN. "I'VE BEEN IN IT TWICE MYSELF, DEAR BOYS, AND I KNOW."



THE BRITISH CHARACTER

IMPORTANCE OF NOT TAKING PRECEDENCE AT DOORWAYS

garage in a brand-new pair of overalls to help with the mending of her car.

Things were a bit quiet when she got there, and most of the merry men had already gone to sleep, but she woke them all up and made them tell her whether they thought the new overalls suited her. And then she said that she wanted them all to have a really jolly time while they were mending her car, because they must usually be so very dull working all day in a garage without the gentle touch of a woman's hand to cheer them.

So she set the garage boys on to arranging the flowers she had brought, and all the others had to sing a rare old English folk-song while they got on with their work. And every now and then she would stop them and ask them about their home-life and whether they were happy. And whenever Mr. Hood appeared in the garage she would come running up to him crying, "Am I doing it right, Mr. Hood?" or, "Do you think I shall make a good mechanic, Mr. Hood?" And at the same time Maid Marion would giggle archly, so that the heart of Mr. Hood grew heavy within him.

And that night after she had gone Mr. Hood called his merry men around him and, "Boys," he said, "we've got to have that car running and delivered to its owner first thing to-morrow morning, even if we have to work all night." And all the merry men agreed that, however much they disliked work, they disliked the gentle touch of a woman's hand still more.

So all that night, for the first time in their lives, the merry men tried to mend a car in the shortest possible space of time. But, alas! that was the one piece of garage work which they had forgotten. And besides that they had already thrown away everything they had been able to unscrew and had written off merrily for fresh parts. So Robin Hood went about with his flash-lamp peering into dustbins and other likely places looking for the missing bits and feeling despair in his heart. But when dawn came they were still a good many pieces short and they couldn't make the car go at all.

So the merry men weren't looking quite so merry when Maid Marion turned up after breakfast, and she soon found out what they had been up to. "The dear creatures!"

she said to Robin Hood. "Why, they would do anything for me already. And now in return I am going to give you all a really jolly morning." And all that morning she showed them how to do folk-dancing and poker-work and made them learn the correct dialect of the district as laid down by an Oxford professor.

Well, that was bad enough, but things began to look even worse in the afternoon, because Maid Marion cornered Robin Hood in the office and asked him if he had got a wife. And Robin Hood hurriedly said he had got three and was marrying another one on Thursday; but she only said that her woman's intuition told her that he was a bachelor and that he needed someone to look after him.

And so that evening Robin Hood felt that the time for desperate action had come. He got out the derelict taxi and all through the night he drove to London and back to fetch the new bits which they wanted to make Maid Marion's car go. He arrived back in Bilbury just as dawn was breaking, and he and his merry men set feverishly to work, and they had the car delivered outside Maid Marion's house by ten o'clock that morning.

But there must have been a spy in Robin Hood's camp, because news of this exploit reached the ears of the Society of Really Rotten Garage Proprietors, of which Robin Hood was one of the most prominent members. And they took a grave view when they heard that he had in two days mended a car which by the rules of the Society should have been kept for at least a month. His name was ceremoniously struck off the register by a finger dipped in grease and graphite, and his sledge-hammer of office was confiscated.

So Mr. Robin Hood had to retire in disgrace, and nowadays he only gets a job when someone wants a battleship broken up in a hurry. But everyone in Bilbury now agrees with Maid Marion when she tells them that the world is a better place for the touch of a woman's hand.

H. W. M.

Whither Away?

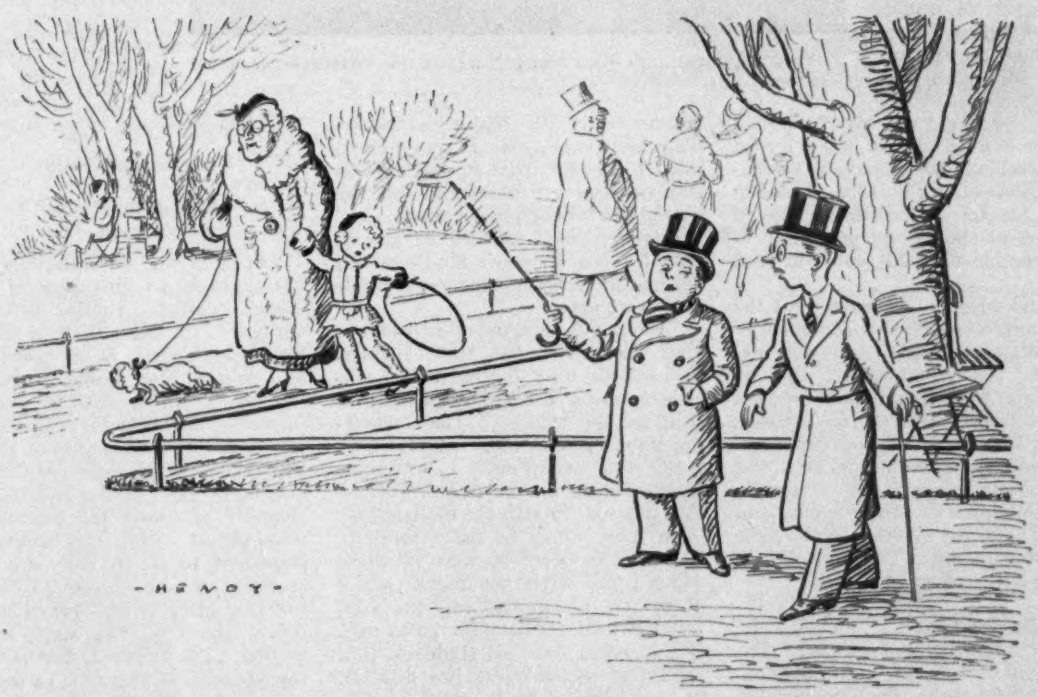
I've left the mines, bid my good-byes
To "Broken Snout" and "Madman's Claims,"
And now I wander, sapphic-wise,
Through England's paradise of names.

Selborne, St. Just-in-Roseland, Marazion,
Stow-on-the-Wold, Tintagel, Temple Grafton,
Westover, Woodthorpe, Bourton-on-the-Water,
Walsham-le-Willows—

Sawley-St.-Judith, Swallowfield, Old Sarum,
Zeal Monachorum, Windrush, Little Wishford,
Sturminster Marshall, Stretton-upon-Dunmoor,
Ingleby Greenhow—

Appledore, Advent, Brandon, Berry Narbor,
Leigh-upon-Mendip, Stanton-upon-Hine-Heath,
Hope-under-Dinmore, Hestercombe, High Easter,
Henley-in-Arden—

Mells, Maplederwell, Warbleton, West Wellow,
Papworth-St.-Agnes, Hutton-in-the-Forest,
Normanton Turville, Milton-under-Wychwood,
Enderby Mavis.



"STACEY, WHO'S THE YOUNGER WOMAN?"

Word-Skirmish

"Following upon"

"ANYONE," said my poor friend Poker, "who wages your word-war in the House of Commons runs the risk of being suspected of frivolity. Which is an odd thing: for where the most words are used, with the most enduring results, you would think that the highest care would be devoted to the choice and employment of words. However, many things are odd in That Place—and indeed everywhere else—"

"What do you mean," I said, "by 'That Place'?"

"In the House of Commons," said Poker, "by an old tradition we may never speak directly of 'the House of Lords.' We have to call it 'Another Place'—I do not know why. So, on the same lines, I always refer to the House of Commons as 'This Place,' or, if I am elsewhere, as 'That Place.'"

"Charming," I said, "and constitutional. Continue."

"Where was I? I remember. Well, at the time of the 'Constitutional Crisis' we were all on our best behaviour, and none would say an unnecessary word that might embarrass the Man at That Wheel. But, as one of your warriors, I was sorely tempted to utter a word or two when I read the preamble to His Majesty's Declaration of Abdication Bill, 1936. That Bill is now an Act of Parliament; and if you look at the second paragraph of the preamble (line 10) you will read this:—

> 'And whereas, *following upon* the communication to this Dominion of His Majesty's said declaration and desire, the Dominion of Canada pursuant to the provisions of section four of the Statute of Westminster, 1931, has requested and consented to the enactment of this Act, and the Commonwealth of Australia, the Dominion of New Zealand, and the Union of South Africa have assented thereto:
>
> Be it therefore, etc., etc.'

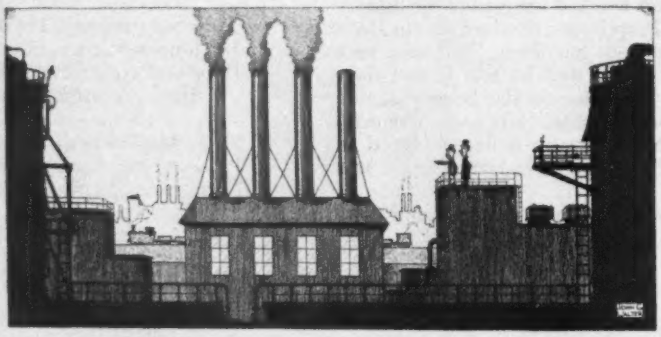
"'*Following upon* . . .' Look at it! Who is following *upon* what? The Dominion of Canada, the Commonwealth of Australia, the Dominion of New Zealand, and the Union of South Africa are *following upon* the communication to His Dominions of His Majesty's declaration and desire . . ."

"But how could they?"

"This dreadful thing, dear old Haddock, is now on the Statute Book. It is part of the strangest and most important Act of Parliament that has been passed for centuries. And it *follows upon* your recent campaign against the journalistic 'following' and (what is worse) 'following *upon*.'

"Well, dear old Haddock, as I have said, I did not want to add to the embarrassment of That Man at That Wheel. But you must not suppose that I sat quite idle, feebly distributing uncharitable blame. I was not disposed to blame anyone much, for I knew—or guessed—with what haste and difficulty that document had been composed, after (or following upon) midnight and earth-circling communications with His Majesty's widely-dispersed Dominions. It was miraculous, I thought, that in the circumstances there had been produced any agreed and intelligible document. And I supposed that, agitated by greater troubles, His Majesty's Ministers had not had the heart or time to expel this 'following upon.'

"But I did—remembering you and your warriors—make some inquiry. And a little bird told me that I was right to think so leniently of our own delicious Government. That 'following upon' is not there through any accident or negligence. It was some Dominion—or maybe two or three—that insisted through the midnight air 'that those words be there inserted.' The reasons were reasons of State which I had better not discuss; and I do not yet understand why the word 'after' would not have served as well. But it shows, dear old Haddock, how careful one should be and how difficult, in the fields of State, is the word-warrior's part."



"WE GOT THE IDEA FROM THE BIG LINERS, SIR CHARLES—THE END CHIMNEY IS A DUMMY."

"True," said I, "but the sad and substantial fact remains that those hideous words are embedded in the Statute Book at the opening of an historic instrument of State, which without doubt will be studied by the Young and expounded by professors so long as the British Constitution survives."

"Ghastly," said Poker.

"Could you not introduce a short amending Bill to substitute the word 'after'?"

"Difficult," said Poker. "And it might split the Empire. For by the Statute of Westminster all the Dominions would have to assent. And suppose they didn't?"

"That would be fun."

"At least," said Poker, "we can make some sort of public protest which will penetrate to all parts of the Empire. Following upon that, our statesmen may be more careful about the things that matter in the next Constitutional Crisis; and our Young will be warned against the evil thing."

"Right," said I. "I will leave no avenue unturned."

P.S.—A naval warrior sends me this delightful Christmas present:—

"Following an order from the Captain-in-Charge, the gates of the Yard are kept in a permanently closed condition."

A. P. H.

Forest Rites

THERE is an old fallacious belief, dating back to the days of feudal seizins, cottars' rights, and serfs' wrongs, to the effect that the ordinary pig, *Sus vulgaris*, is an acorn eater, and in the New Forest there is an Ordinance which entitles the hog-owner to turn loose his animals in the woodlands at that season of the year when the ground is richly carpeted with acorns, or not, as the case may be. Actually of course the Scandinavian wood-pigeon, who synchronises his migration to fit in with any acorn season there may be, sees to it that this oak-tree litter is well tidied up long before the pigs can start to grub around. This, however, does not affect the situation in any way, as the pig is very far from being a fool and has not the slightest intention of ruining his

digestion with unpalatable things like acorns when, to misquote ANDREW MARVELL, "Yonder all before him lie gardens of vast fertility."

Abutting on the Forest—and this is the correct word to use when describing house property in this vicinity—are innumerable desirable residences occupied by keen amateur gardeners who obligingly toil for ten months in the year to provide fodder for somebody else's pigs during the two months in the autumn. This is what is called possessing "full Forest rights." Many people think that "Forest rights" means the privilege of decorating woodland glades with old newspapers, broken beer-bottles and empty salmon-tins, and the systematic removal of all bluebell growth; but this is not the case. Forest rights are not vested in human beings but are the sole prerogative of the animals, who are entitled to raid any garden, orchard, or fruit and potato shed into which they can force their way. And the New Forest pig, having been bred from good old burglar stock since the days of WILLIAM RUFUS, can break into anything short of a bullion vault.

There are certain rules in the game, and the Forest Commissioners very sportingly allow the garden owner to fence against the pig, making no restrictions in any way as to the type of barrier he may care to erect. It is believed that if a multi-millionaire were to settle in the district he might possibly be able to cope with the situation by constructing a reinforced concrete wall with twelve-foot foundations and a spiked top over and under which the New Forest pig could not force his way; but old and experienced residents doubt the efficacy of this and consider that a deep Whipsnade type of chasm or ha-ha filled with chlorine poison-gas is the only solution.

According to his lights the New Forest pig plays the game and is not like the fox who kills ten times the number of chickens he can eat. He works methodically and thoroughly and there is no unbridled licence or wanton waste like breaking into a different garden every night and eating only a quarter or even a fifth part of the produce. His rule is to stick to one garden till not a single onion bulb or celery stalk remains, and then to move on to the next in strict rotation. As many unsporting garden owners have removed their potatoes, onions and apples from the gardens and stored them in sheds before the "acorn" season arrives, the pig is entitled to force any outbuilding in which produce of this description has been secreted, and he may also help himself to any chicken-, horse- or cattle-feed to which he may gain access during these legitimate investigations.

The acorn season is supposed to last from the 25th September till the 22nd November, and after this date the garden owner is permitted to grow as many summer flowers or vegetables as he wishes without let or hindrance; but this rule depends entirely upon how the pigs have carried out their task. The authorities concerned have a by-law that they can put into operation, by which the "acorn" season can be extended for a further fourteen days if it is considered that the pigs have been hampered in any way in the completion of their work and if as the result there are still several undestroyed or only partially destroyed gardens in the area.

The residents have no ground for complaint, for they obtain ample compensation. Their ground is annually well turned over free of cost in readiness for the spring sowings, and root-pruning is carried out gratis, together with that thorough aeration of soil which is so essential to good results. And in December they may purchase in the local butchers' shops the finest cuts of garden-fed pork, in which the gourmet will detect a delicate flavour combining the fleeting sweetness of the Mrs. Sinkins pink with the more pungent aroma of the blanched celery.

C. S. J.



"AND HOW WAS AUNT AGNES THIS MORNING?"
"I'M BLEST IF I CAN REMEMBER."
"NEVER MIND, DARLING, AS LONG AS YOU INQUIRED."

Last Translations from the Ish

LXXXVIII.—Disinterested

Those who have never
Published a book
Can look in the tuppenny box
Without a qualm.

LXXXIX.—It Just Shows

It is the fate of the ordinary man,
Whether self-made or mass-produced,
To bear the unmistakable imprint
Of the manufacturer.

XC.—Pals

The airman
Granted to one newspaper
The exclusive right
Of calling him by his first name.

XCI.—All Wrong

The same paper was misguided enough
To print an article about
That Tired Feeling at the End of the Day,
Implying that it was natural,

And thus,
As an advertiser protested,
Striking at the very root
Of the patent-medicine market.

XCII.—No Thrill

On the list of regular news-reel items
In which I find it easy
To take no interest whatever,

Last week's American horse-race
Ranks second
To last month's Australian horse-race.

XCIII.—Simile: Falsely Climactic

Falsely climactic
(Though only just),
Like the penultimate
Chord of a tango.

XCIV.—Another Simile: Misgivings

Misgivings
Such as assail the diner
Who finds among his whitebait

Lemon-pips
That have obviously been fried.

XCV.—What, Again?

The part-singer
Who comes in fourth
Must often find it hard to show
The necessary pleased surprise,

Singing a phrase
Already bellowed in turn
By the three others.

XCVI.—A Rich Protector

No matter how poor, how solitary,
If you have a few shillings
In a bank,
You may enjoy the luxury
Of feeling protected:

It is on your side
Against, *e.g.*,
Forgers of cheques.

XCVII.—As Ever

The trouble with him
Is lack of originality.

Always calls a spade
A spade,
And has no ideas about
Anything new to let bygones be.

XCVIII.—Black Care

In off-moments
The newly-promoted manager
Worried himself with the thought
That he was now in a position
To be swindled by people who,

If found out,
Might murder him.

XCIX.—Old Stuff

There is no need,
According to some people,
To think of an answer to an argument
That has been stated many times.

"Two and two are four?
Pooh, that's old stuff.
The Arabs used to trot out that idea."

C.—Thought for Dictators

"A new generation will grow up
With no taste for it."

Remember that?
Will the dictators' efforts
To make it true of liberty
Be in the long run more successful

Than those of the Prohibitionists
To make it true of beer?

Epilogue

With this round figure—and although C may not be quite round it is considerably rounder than 100—I bring this series of translations to a close. Neatly copied out on the backs of maps, they would be quite invisible to anyone looking only at the maps; or they may be placed one by one on an ordinary coal fire without fear of an explosion. They might put it out, though.

R. M.



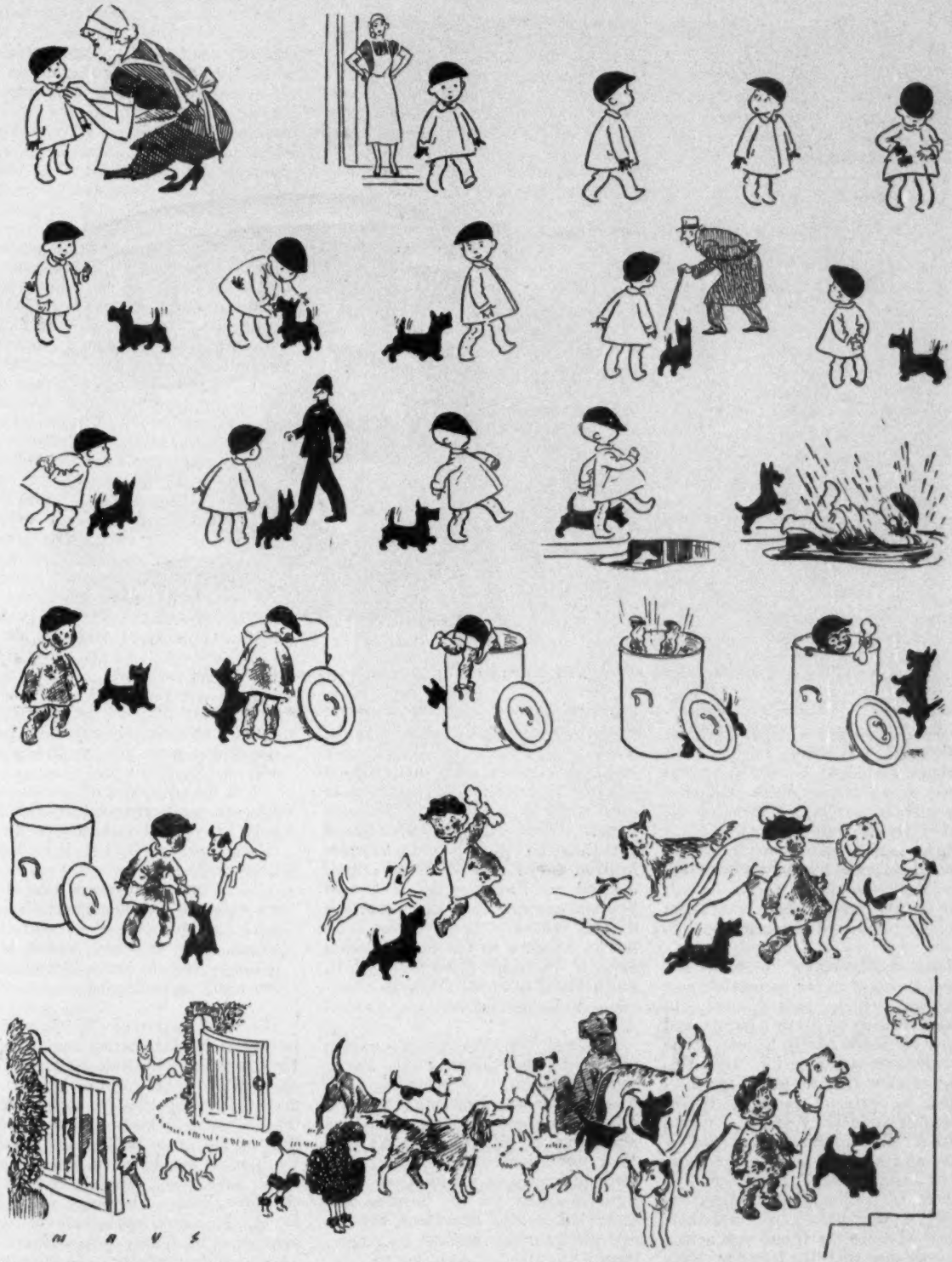
The Private Papers of Arthur Widdleswick;

or, More Red Tape in the Home

New Year Resolutions

I doubt whether my friend Widdleswick, at any rate in the later years of his life which are covered by the papers he left me, was given to the making of New Year resolutions. Certainly, although we were on terms of the closest intimacy, I never heard him speak of having followed such a practice, and the probability is that he would regard it as too likely to be subversive of an orderly régime and therefore repugnant to sound administration.

But while probably unwilling to commit himself, even in principle, to



TWENTY MINUTES IN THE LIFE OF A SMALL BOY



"Now try to get Auntie Myrtle on the North Regional, Eustace."

anything connoting a departure from established procedure in his own personal conduct, he did not, his papers show, discourage the making of new resolutions by members of his family. On the contrary, he did everything he could to put the resolutions on a sound business footing and to facilitate their observance (or in default their seemly recision) by having them carefully minuted and recorded.

Naturally, however, he would feel bound to resist as far as possible any resolution which seemed likely to impinge unduly on his own habits, and it was no doubt partly to allow time for adequate examination from this point of view that he called for completion as early as the beginning of December in each year of a return entitled "Resolutions proposed to be made and adopted with effect from the 1st January next." It is interesting to note in passing that in thus encouraging the making of resolutions well in advance my friend was acting in accordance with the latest precepts of modern psychology. Indeed it occurs to me in this connection that it might be possible to show that the whole system for which Widdleswick stood is a response to well-defined sub-conscious needs on the part of those upon whom it is practised. The idea is certainly attractive, for I understand that there are those who are sometimes inclined to be critical of the official method, and I am sure that if it could be demonstrated that the method is devised not only to save the state but to minister to the deepest needs of those who come in contact with it, much would have been done to reconcile it to its detractors.

However, I do not recall ever having discussed with Widdleswick the deeper significance of his methods, and whether any considerations of the kind I have suggested were present to his mind when he insisted upon the New Year resolutions of his family being made in December I cannot say. The form he issued for the purpose is a somewhat lengthy document, but the first few questions indicate its general trend:—

1. Does the new resolution affect directly or indirectly any other person living with you at the same address?

2. If the resolution affects or may affect the registered head of the household, has special authority been obtained (on Form N.R.Y./H.H. 3) for its submission?

3. If the new resolution is a repetition of an old new resolution made in any previous year (or years), state in what year it was (*a*) first, and (*b*) last adopted, and the result in each year.

The advantages of Widdleswick's procedure in this matter were many. He was frequently able to detect in the resolutions before him elements of mutual incompatibility, and where this occurred as between two resolutions of the same person, to prevent for him or her by a timely warning much unnecessary disappointment in the New Year. Similarly, when he found that the resolutions of one member of his family appeared to run counter to those of others, he was often able to obviate such an inauspicious start to the year as would have

resulted from a conflict of idealogies between, say, mother and daughter or sister and brother.

In his efforts to avoid the adoption of resolutions seen to be inimical to his own interests, he was of course not always successful. I remember his telling me on more than one occasion how he deplored the handicap under which he worked in his domestic affairs as compared with his official duties, in that he was not in the former sphere acting upon statutory authority. The most he could do with a resolution of which he disapproved, if attempts at conciliation failed, was to minute it accordingly; he could not statutorily disallow it. Sometimes, however, circumstances came to his assistance. In his papers relating to the year 1930/31, for instance, I find that he recorded disapproval of a resolution by Mrs. Widdleswick to give up smoking. With characteristic foresight he had detected the possibility that it might amount to no more in the result than a resolution not to provide herself with cigarettes of her own but to smoke his. His minutes show that the resolution was sternly resisted throughout December and that, all efforts to secure its withdrawal having failed, it was registered under Category II. (Disapproved) on 31.12.30. On 1.1.31, however, it appears Mrs. Widdleswick received a New Year's gift of five hundred cigarettes from a cousin, and on 2.1.31 my friend was requested to make immediate arrangements for the resolution to be formally rescinded.

The early days of January naturally found Widdleswick very busy. He did not always wait to be notified of the breakdown of resolutions (though the procedure he had evolved provided for such notification), but himself took the initiative whenever he had reason to believe that any had become abortive. Here, for example, are some interesting minutes from a file of a few years ago:—

Winifred.

With reference to your Resolution No. 3/1932, relating to the supply of part-worn socks, undergarments, etc., returned for reconditioning under the terms of Sec. 1 (*i.*) (c) of the Socks and Undergarments (Reconditioning) Agreement of 1929 (Chap. 69), it is observed that no socks, etc., were found by me on the appointed day in the drawer specified in the Agreement. Is the Resolution to be taken as rescinded? (If so, please complete Form B, attached.) A. W., 8/1/32.



THE SENSE OF POWER

A MUSSOLINI OF THE SUBURBS WITH A TWIST OF THE WRIST WIPES OUT A BAND OF ONE HUNDRED MANDOLINS.

Arthur.

No; not yet. Which drawer did you try? W. W., 10/1/32.

Winifred.

The left-hand bottom—*see* para. 123 of Sched. A of the Agreement cited in my minute of 8/1/32.

N.B.—Where *are* the socks? Urgent, please. A. W., 11/1/32.

Arthur.

The left-hand bottom drawer is full. Can you say, please, what is the correct procedure when the drawer scheduled in the specific—I mean specified in the schedule is full? W. W., 13/1/32.

Winifred.

This will require consideration. The point does not seem to have been provided for.

Meantime you have not replied to the latter part of my minute. Where *are* the socks? VERY URGENT, PLEASE.
A. W., 13/1/32.

Arthur.

Omission regretted. On the top of the chest. Didn't you see them?
W. W., 14/1/32.

Mr. Silvertop's Protuberant Nephew

"To the men of my family," Mr. Silvertop remarked without resentment, "romance 'as never come what you might call 'opping in at the window. I remember a-telling you what an 'ard, 'ard row my nephew 'Oskin 'ad to 'oe before 'e got 'is lines in 'is pocket. Well, it was nothing to what 'is pore young brother 'Ercules 'as just been through.

"Corlumme! What a party! 'Er name was Primrose, and she lived with 'er widowed Ma down in Brighton, where 'Ercules works on the sewage. 'E met 'er first through 'er 'at being blown off in a gale on the front, and 'e made such a gallant rescue just as it was going out to sea that she couldn't 'ardly say No to a cup of tea in a cafe, though 'e ses she did 'er best, for she was a terrible one for manners and never rightly got over them not 'aving been properly introduced.

"That there cup of tea was 'Ercules' undoing. 'E ses when 'e looked into 'er eyes across the cream duffnuts 'is knees fair turned to jelly—and there's no worse sign than that. Saturday 'e took 'er for a walk, and the Wednesday after 'e wanted to take 'er to the flicks, but she wouldn't 'ear of it—said 'er Ma didn't approve. That ought to 'ave warned 'im if 'e 'adn't been past warning by then.

"Next thing 'appened was a note from 'er Ma inviting 'im ever so dignified to tea, so the Sunday 'e brushes up 'is 'air and round 'e goes. Primrose opens the door and 'e fetches 'er a kiss to keep 'is courage up, but all 'e gets for it 's a clip on the ear. Upstairs in an 'arf-dark parlour 'er Ma 's sitting waiting for 'im as stiff as a duchess, as though she'd been set in wax, 'e ses. It was so cold they might 'ave been sitting in a fridge, and all she did was to nod at 'im ever so genteel and start asking 'im questions about 'imself.

"She went on till she come to 'is work, and when 'e ses 'Sewage' 'er nose turns up till it near 'its the ceiling. After a bit 'e thought per-'aps it was 'is turn to break the silence, so 'Often go to the dogs?' 'e asks. 'Certainly not,' she answers. 'I 'eartily disapproves of all gambling.' 'You don't say!' ses pore 'Ercules, 'oo'd been brought up ordinary-like, and there they sits till Primrose carries in the tea. When 'e offers the old bird a gasper afterwards and she tells 'im she disapproves of smoking nearly as 'eartily as drinking and gambling and 'e didn't make a bolt for it while the going was good—well, you can see for yourself 'ow badly Primrose 'ad taken 'im.

"Some'ow or other 'e managed to stay the course for another few weeks and almost make the old geyser take a liking to 'im. Then one day 'e pulled up 'is socks and went and asked for Primrose's 'and. 'Er Ma's answer took 'im aback a bit. 'It all depends on the bumps,' she ses. '*Bumps?*' asks 'Ercules. 'Bumps,' she ses. 'I'm a great believer in phrendology, I am, and before I gives you an answer about Primmy you must go and 'ave your 'ead read by Professor McGorky —I've reel faith in 'im, and I'll go by the report what I'll ask 'im to send me.'

"Well, knowing 'is napper was as smooth as an egg, it struck young 'Ercules that if 'is 'ole 'appiness 'ung on bumps it was only common sense to know a bit more about 'em, so 'e parted with 'arf-a-dollar for one of them guide-books to the 'ead. And after 'e'd made out a sort of map on the back of an envelope of everything 'e reckoned Primrose's Ma would fancy 'e took a little 'ammer and put a sock over it so 'e wouldn't break the skin, and set to work in front of 'is looking-glass. Corlumme! Talk about martyred for love!

"By the time 'e goes to see the Professor, several days after, 'is 'eadache 'ad gone, but as luck would 'ave it, the Professor's lintel being about nine inches lower than what 'Ercules was used to, 'e caught the side of 'is dome the most almighty crack as 'e goes in, and a bump comes up like a walnut; but feeling that the less said about akcherly *bumping* 'is 'ead the better, 'e keeps quiet about it to the Professor, 'oo sits 'im down in what you might call a wet-shampoo position.

"'Ercules ses the old Professor began to purr right away. 'Coo, I never did!' 'e ses. 'What a *wonderful* bump of Ambition! What's your job, young man?' 'Sewage,' mutters 'Ercules into 'is chest. 'Can you go far in that?' asks the Professor. 'Never far enough,' ses 'Ercules. 'And *what* a tribute to your Steadfastness—you ought to make an 'usband in a million. I say,' cries the old perisher, 'I 'aven't never felt a bump of Resource like this—it's staggering!' That's just what it 'ad been, 'Ercules tells me, for the 'ammer 'ad slipped in 'is 'and.

"Well, this goes on all the way round, and seeing 'ow generous to 'imself with the virtues 'Ercules 'ad been the Professor was fair dancing with excitement, until at last 'e gets to the bump what pore 'Ercules 'ad made as 'e come in, and then there was suddenly a ugly silence. 'I can't believe it,' ses the Professor, feeling the bump as if it was the 'ead of a snake, 'but it's true! I've often 'eard tell of it, but in a lifetime in the profession I never met it before. 'Ere, get out of my 'ouse, you 'orrible monster!'—and the next thing pore 'Ercules knew 'e was on the street."

"But what did the bump mean?" I asked.

"That 's just what 'Ercules can't find out," Mr. Silvertop replied. "It's something a sight too advanced for 'is book, and now they've 'ad the Professor's report Primrose and 'er Ma won't even answer 'is letters, so I dare say 'e'll never know. But I tell 'im it must mean an uncanny power of making 'ellish lucky escapes!"

ERIC.



"NOW IS THAT THE WRONG NUMBER I ALWAYS DIAL WHENEVER I TRY TO DIAL WESTERN 5772?"

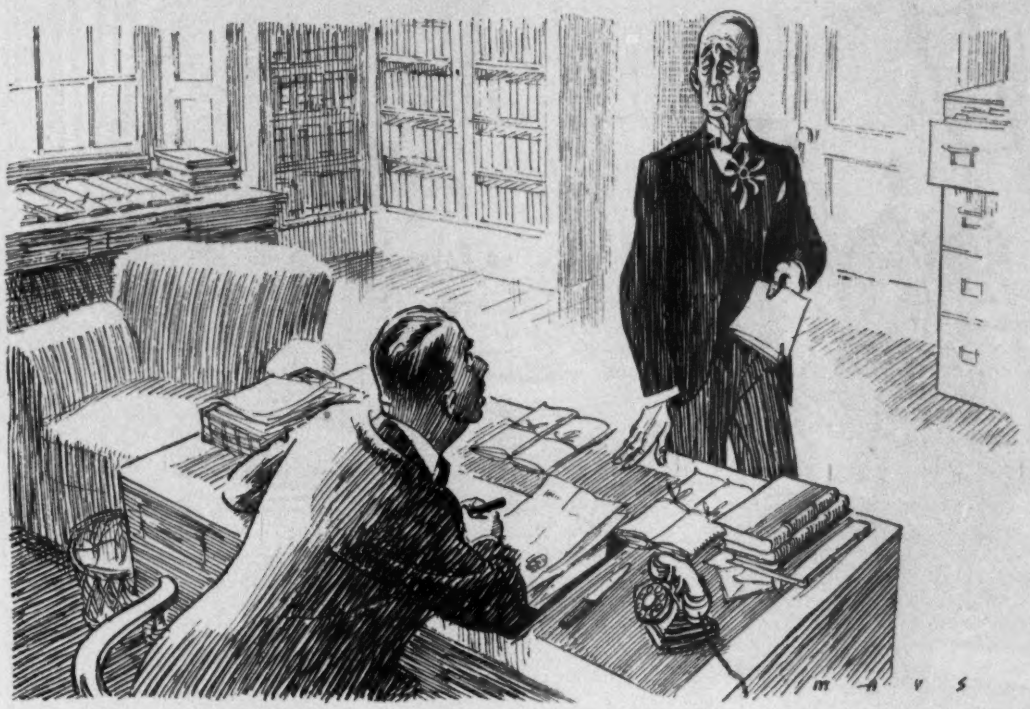
7/6

"YOU will find the English money a little confusing," said the Archdeacon's wife, leading Olga behind the toy-stall.

"Do not trouble," Olga answered reassuringly. "In Russia, when I was a child, I used to work for charity. The mistakes shall all be on the right side."

We left her making a doll say "Mama" to the Bishop. Some people have that sort of gift. I could not even make a rabbit squeak at a curate. At a Sale of Work I can only follow the flowing garments of the Archdeacon's wife and pay for the gifts she drops into my arms.

I soon found myself the owner of a



"WHERE ON EARTH DID YOU GET THAT TIE, JOHNSON?"
"FROM MY AUNTIE FLO, SIR."

looking-glass spotted with sealing-wax flowers, and an embroidered linen cover for *The Radio Times*. Her hand was hovering over some lavender-bags shaped like rabbits when she caught sight of the Rector's schoolboy nephew busily unwrapping the presents in the bran-tub and putting stones in their place. While she was correcting him I went to the refreshment-room.

I fought every inch of the way to the tea-urn. I snatched a cup from under the very nose of the President of the Women's Institute—a difficult feat—and I was just looking round for the milk when——

"Finished?" said a well-known voice. "That's splendid! I want you to come and make an audience."

I often make an audience for the Archdeacon's wife. She knows that she can count on me.

She stayed outside herself and shepherded me into the Church Hall. It was full of a depressed mob of women looking like what you look like in the advertisement before you have used somebody's soap. They were the unpopular lot, the misfits, who could only watch from a distance their radiant sisters selling cushions and peas in a jar and asking the number of currants in a cake. They were the audience, and not even the Ladies' Orchestra and the Sunday-School tap-dancing could cheer them.

But when we came out all was different. Smiles everywhere. Beaming looks, friendly whispers between everybody. I felt I should go while the going was good and went to fetch Olga.

I found her clasping a much bepetticoated doll and talking to the Rector. If it had been in any other place or with any other person I should have said flirting. The Rector looked at me apologetically and said that his nephew was missing. He went off hurriedly.

Olga looked at me reproachfully.

"If you had not come I would have sold her."

"Olga," I said, "we must go."

"I will not go till I have sold her," she insisted.

"The Archdeacon's wife is coming. I shall have to make another audience."

"*You* must buy her," Olga said firmly.

"How much?"

Olga flapped about among the doll's underclothing.

"I cannot find the label," she said, strewing leaves of tissue-paper right and left.

There was a rustle behind me.

"Buying a doll?" said the Archdeacon's wife. "That's splendid!" and she passed on.

In the middle of her back was a square of paper. "*You can take off all my clothes*—7/6," I read.

Olga gazed at it spellbound. "That is my label," she said in a stage-whisper.

No wonder everybody was happy. No wonder the Rector's nephew was missing. I gave Olga seven-and-sixpence and hurried her away. It is the first Sale of Work I have been to where I should have liked to stay longer.

Real Guile

"The worst ball of the day tempted Fingleton to slash a short leg-break from Robins past cover-point, but the ball spun lower, wider, and higher than was expected and fell into the hands of point."—*Daily Paper.*

"Some two thousand years ago, just 28 years before Christ, Homer, the great Roman poet, said: *Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori.*"—*Letter to Indian Paper.*

This was in his well-known novel, *The Æneid.*



"Well, dear, you don't want to overdo it, and you don't want to look dowdy. Seeing it's in a Church Hall, I should wear a semi-full afternoon dress with a chiffon scarf, and chance it."

Centenaries

He was not known for golden deeds;
He never won to high success,
Like those great Names of whom one reads
Just now in our more thoughtful Press.

A village tombstone rude and worn
Is all that now remains to show
The simple fact that he was born
Like them, a hundred years ago.

He came no doubt of lowly stock,
A farmer's never-resting hand
Called daily by the morning cock
(Including Sundays) to the land.

He tossed the hay and lopped the boughs,
Ploughed, and was not ashamed to dig,
Could talk familiarly of cows,
And knew the inner life of Pig.

A simple man 'mid simple men,
Hard was his toil and rough his fare
Save when some poaching now and then
Earned him a pheasant or a hare.

And yet he had his lighter moods,
And with some maiden oft at eve
Would roam the woodland solitudes
(A frequent usage, I believe).

And she in time would share his cot,
And cook his meals, and rub his chest—
Whether he *was* all this or not
I cannot, as a fact, attest.

He may for all I know have been
The postman, kept the village shop,
Have loafed a long life through, or e'en
Have fattened as the local cop.

Details like these I put aside;
But when centenaries are due
And he by rights is qualified
I think he ought to have one too.

And though, perchance, from lack of skill
I do but urge a trifling claim,
I could have done him better still
Only I clean forget his name. DUM-DUM.



THE SPANISH MAIN

CAPTAIN HOOKLER. "HOW'S THIS FOR A VARIATION?"



Very considerate Artist. "GETTING TIRED, MISS KNATCHBULL?"

Aunt Agatha Learns "Knock-Knock."

Marjorie, James and myself were staying last week-end in the country with Aunt Agatha. Aunt Agatha is not a bad old trout, but trying at times.

"Tell me," she suddenly said after dinner, settling herself in her arm-chair, "what is this 'Knock-knock'?"

Marjorie and I kept silence, hoping it would blow over. James murmured something about having a rubber of bridge. But Aunt Agatha only repeated her question a little sharply, so James got up in desperation and poked the fire. This never fails to draw Aunt, who is of the old school and considers it as much of an impertinence to poke your hostess's fire unasked as to poke her ribs. But when the subsequent acrimony had died away, Aunt Agatha was still on the trail. She prides herself on keeping up with modern trends, and presumably rumours of "Knock-knock" had just reached her village.

"Don't any of you know? They tell me it's all the rage in London."

"Well, it's a sort of a game," I began doubtfully—"a word game."

"Like Letter-bags?"

"N–not quite. It plays on words. Like the old one—'Do you know Isabel?'"

"Of course I know Isabel. I met her in Partington's only yesterd——"

"No, no." James came to my rescue. "'Do you know Isabel?' is the *game*. You say 'Isabel who?' and the other fellow replies, 'Isabel necessary on a bicycle?'"

"I see," replied Aunt Agatha doubtfully. "Well, do I now say 'Is it?' . . . Oh, no, *I* see," she repeated with more conviction. "But where does the 'Knock-knock' come in?"

"It doesn't in that game." Marjorie now took a hand. "In 'Knock-knock' I say 'Knock-knock,' and you say, 'Who's there?' And I say—I say, oh anything, and you say, 'Anything who?' and I say something."

Marjorie doesn't explain well. Aunt was quite bewildered.

"*Anything* who?" she repeated.

"Listen," I said firmly. "James and I will show you one. James here says 'Knock-knock,'" I quickly went on, thus skilfully passing James the buck, and then turned politely to him: "Yes, James, who's there?"

"Dirty dog!" muttered James under his breath.

"Dirty dog who?" I asked.

"You!" snapped James, which finished that one and left Aunt Agatha looking anxiously from one of us to the other.

"It's all right, Auntie," soothed Marjorie. "*I'll* show you." Then to me: "Knock-knock."

"Who's there?"

"V.8," replied Marjorie, adding to Aunt in an explanatory aside: "That's a make of car, you know."

"How can a car knock?" asked Aunt Agatha.

This question seemed to open up such vistas of complicated misunderstanding that by common consent we ignored it.

"V.8 who?" I went on.

"V.8 'ITLER."

She repeated it two or three times



Fakir. "No, no, Your Majesty. Not the rope trick. Please don't ask me; I'm so sick of hearing the word mesmerism."

till Aunt Agatha vaguely got the idea.

"But personally, Marjorie dear, I rather admire the man in a way. He's done a lot to save Germany from——"

"But the *Jews* don't like him. And V.8 means '*Ve* 'ate'—it's supposed to be Jews speaking. See?"

Aunt considered. "Yes, I suppose I do see. Have you any better ones?"

We knew several better ones but not that we could tell Aunt Agatha. Some we couldn't even tell Marjorie, and if you knew what *that* girl is like, it'll just show you. Eventually we gave her a few: "Who's there?" "Jacob." "Jacob who?" "Jacob air of sparkling eyes"; and "Verdi." "Verdi who?" "Verdi bee sucks, there suck I," and "Tasmania," "Tasmania slip 'twixt cup and lip."

"Are you making these up?" Aunt asked at last.

"No. But somebody has, of course."

"Good games should develop originality," she reproved. "So far you've apparently been trading on other people's wit."

This put us on our mettle. We all thought hard for some minutes.

"Go on," whispered Marjorie to me. "Go on yourself," I retorted. "Go on, James!" we both said loudly and in unison.

James suddenly did. "Knock-knock," cried he, turning on Aunt Agatha.

"Come in," replied the old lady surprisingly. "No, I'm sorry; that's not it. I mean, who's there?"

"Agatha."

"Me?"

"You say, 'Agatha who?'"

"'Agatha who?' then."

"Agatha can't anthwer thilly quethtionth," lisped James.

There was a groan from Marjorie, then shattering silence.

"*Not* very funny," announced Aunt Agatha at last.

We rounded on her. "Well, you do one. It's your turn. We've given you the idea. The more of a pun it is the better."

Aunt Agatha smiled knowingly at us. "I had already thought of one."

"Good. Let's have it!"

"Knock-knock," remarked Aunt Agatha genteelly.

"Who's there?" we chorused.

"Peter."

"Peter who?"

"Peter Pan."

That of course stopped the whole thing. We felt that Aunt Agatha never *would* get it. And after all her reply was rather apt, for when you come to think of it the whole game was just about the Peter Pan level.

By common consent we got the bridge things out and started a rubber. But not till Aunt Agatha, suddenly laughing mysteriously, had announced: "You know, it's just occurred to me, my dears, that a game of that sort *might* rather lend itself to, shall we say, *improper* innuendo."

There was a silence.

"It might," said Marjorie in a strangled voice. "I never thought of that."

James and I were too busy trying not to catch each other's eye to say anything. A. A.

Lover's Lament

My love is like a red, red rose,
The finest ever seen;
At least she was till yesterday,
But now she's powdered green.

My love has long black tresses
Of which I'm very fond;
At least I was till yesterday,
But now she is a blonde.

She should have died hereafter,
But she chose to dye to-day.
I wish she'd spend my money
In a less exotic way.

The Boasters

"GLAD to see you back, old man," said Brown. "The 8.16 hasn't seemed like itself without your cheery face and ready flow of wit."

"We've had to play cut-throat while you've been down with flu," said Green less tactfully. Eckleberry-Carthew just dealt the cards and scowled, but that is Eckleberry-Carthew's way.

"Rather mean of you fellows not to join me in having flu," I said. "My only solace as I lay tossing and turning was the hope that I had passed on a germ or so in your direction. How do you manage to avoid it?"

"Three hearts," said Brown. "My method is perfectly simple. I just go about boasting that I never have flu. 'Flu?' I say, as often as I can get anybody to listen. 'It's a funny thing, but I never by any chance have flu. I suppose there's something in my system that forms a sort of natural barrier against it. Many a time I've tried very hard to have flu just to see what it was like; but fate has denied me the privilege, and I've almost given up hoping.' When the germs hear that sort of talk they just say, 'Oh, yeah! So you *want* flu, do you?' and then they fly away and settle on somebody else. I've bluffed them like that for years, and I don't see why I shouldn't go on doing it permanently."

"Three spades," said Green, "if you've quite done chatting. But since we are on the subject of flu I don't mind confessing that the way I've always managed to avoid it is to pretend to be quite sure that I'm going to have it. When people ask me if I've had flu yet this season I just smile wanly and say, 'Not yet, but I'm sure to have it sooner or later. It doesn't matter what precautions I take, it always gets me. In fact at this present moment I'm probably sickening for it. I don't feel exactly ill, but sort of depressed, and at any moment I'm expecting all the usual symptoms to appear. I've warned my wife not to be surprised if I arrive home in the middle of the day either in an ambulance or assisted by a kindly colleague; and at the office things have been so arranged that they will be able to spare me for the usual week or so.' When the germs hear me chatting in *that* strain they feel that it's absolutely not worth while making an attack. Germs have a strong sense of sportsmanship, and they would get no kick at all out of infecting somebody who was waiting for them, as you might say, with open arms. I've bluffed them in that way for years."

"Ugh!" said Eckleberry-Carthew, signifying that he had no wish to back up his partner's hearts.

"What's *your* method of avoiding flu, Eckleberry-Carthew?" I asked.

"I don't avoid it," he wheezed. "I've got it now. I have it every year, but I don't go to bed with it. I just stagger about with it and give it to everybody I possibly can, especially bumptious asses who think they have some clever method of not getting it."

I fancy that some of Eckleberry-Carthew's germs must have overheard Brown and Green explaining their methods, because next morning Eckleberry-Carthew and I were reduced to playing cribbage.



"YES, DEAR, I'M BOILING SOME WATER FOR THE RADIATOR—AND I'M HEATING UP A TIN OF PETROL FOR YOU TOO."

At the Pantomime

"MOTHER GOOSE"
(HIPPODROME)

JUST as the works of Mr. P. G. WODEHOUSE are said to be microscopically adjusted by their ingenious author to give satisfaction equally on either side of the Atlantic, so this rich Christmas-pudding of entertainment has been kept carefully within the limits prescribed by the common denominators of junior and senior tastes; and with complete success. No signs of cramp are noticeable, for the field is far less restricted than the makers of children's plays sometimes imagine. Even Miss FLORENCE DESMOND's brilliant talent for impersonation is fully appreciated, for what parent to-day can hope to defeat his young at the fascinating game of Spot the Stars?

At the beginning of the performance I selected from my neighbours three subjects for observation who seemed to represent the three key age-classes of 0–10, 30–40 and 70–80, and at the end it was impossible to say which had been best pleased. They were all strongly approving.

Mother Goose herself, the pillar and prop of the whole nonsensical business, is played particularly well by Mr. GEORGE LACY, a comedian with a big range of effects and a most engaging personality. Both on and off the golden-egg standard his antics never fail, and during the depression into which the old lady is thrown by the brutal frankness of her son I found him almost too affecting.

Miss DESMOND's principal boy has charm and impudence for six, and an endless store of personalities to draw on; a shake of the hair, a slip of the face, a cruel twist to the tongue, and one by one the Queens of the Beverley Hills are conjured up. Her *Dietrich* is inimitable (except of course by the DIETRICH), for the voice is exact and the facial parody depends on only the slightest emphasis of nose and underlip.



M.G.H. (MASTER OF GOOSE-HOUNDS)
Mother Goose . . . . MR. GEORGE LACY



LADS OF THE VILLAGE
Jack . . . . . MR. MAX WALL
Robbie . . . . . MISS FLORENCE DESMOND

Maisie, most faithful of attendants, is robustly taken by Miss MAMIE SOUTTER, who contributes as an individual turn before the curtain three clever versions of the Death of a Worm at the relentless hands of Young Chicago, Young Bootle and Young Belgravia. Miss CHILI BOUCHIER's *Jill* more than justifies the fluttering heart of the principal boy, and Mr. MAX WALL, who plays *Jack*, shows himself gifted both as a comedian and as an eccentric dancer, in which *rôle* he appears almost, if not quite, filleted.

Besides these traditional plums the pudding contains a number of special prizes, headed by MARKOVA and ANTON DOLIN, who have a delightful little ballet-scene to themselves. LUCIENNE and ASHOUR are comedy dancers to whom an unbelievable number of accidents occur in the course of an innocent waltz; NICOLETTE is that rarity, a graceful tumbler; and the GAUDSMITH BROTHERS have educated a couple of French poodles up to a scholarship standard of disobedience.

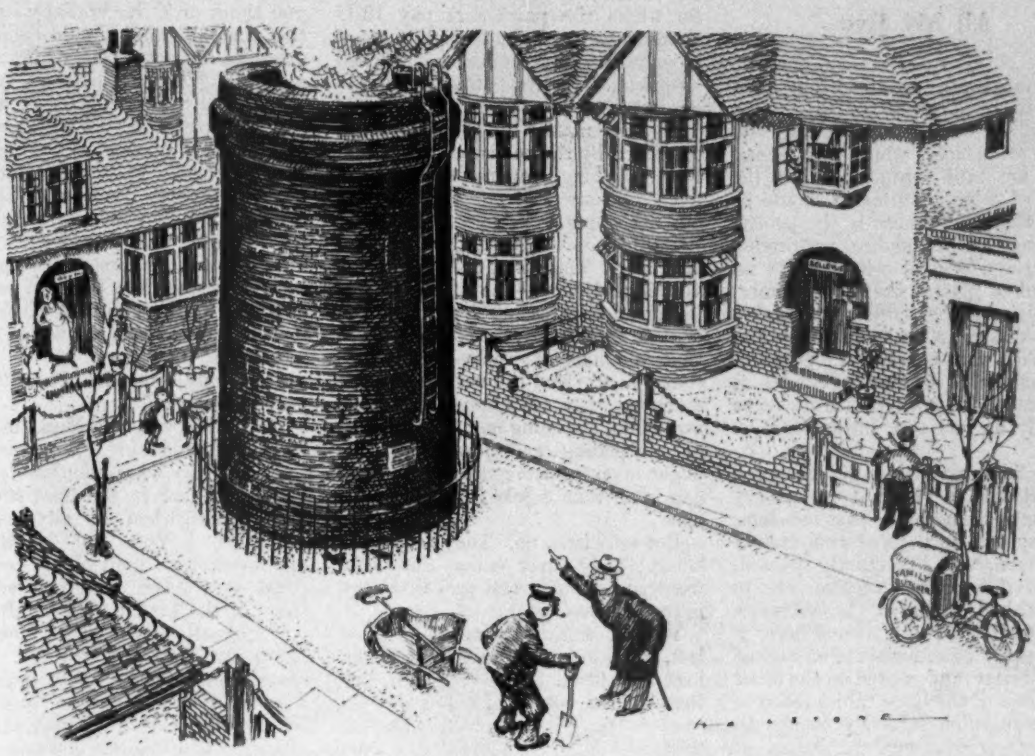
For their beautifully-finished chorus work the 16 J. W. JACKSON GIRLS get high marks, and the 25 EILEEN ROGAN CHILDREN also comport themselves with credit. The sets and dresses are bright and numerous and kind to the eyes; the Mickey Mouse scene is exceedingly well done.

I have come very near forgetting the *Goose*, and I hasten to say that she is a magnificently upholstered creature, most competently stuffed by Mr. GEORGE QUEEN.

ERIC.

"Of course, there has been a change in the type of master. For instance, the type of French master you read about in schoolboy stories once existed—with his odd clothes and odder accent."
Evening Paper.

The modern French master's accent, of course, only appears odd when he happens to say something in French.



"CAN YOU TELL ME WHAT *THAT* IS?"
"*THAT*, SIR, IS THE NEW RAILWAY TUNNEL AIR-SHAFT."
"DEAR ME! HOW EXTREMELY ANNOYING FOR THE RESIDENTS!"
"LOR, SIR, THAT WAS THERE *LONG* BEFORE THE RESIDENTS."

Winter Sunshine

"COME South! Come South!" the posters cried,
"To where sweet Summer stays—
To a golden land and an azure tide
And the tropic moons ablaze."
But I thought, "Scotland's maybe the place to spend
these winter days."

So I went North a day and a day
To where the winter sun
Came groping only a little way
Out of oblivion
And rolled along the rim of the world; and then brief day
was done.

The steel-grey frost had set his hand
Heavy on howe and hill;
Darkened and silent lay the land
And the leaden sea was still;
But the windless air said, "Peace on earth and unto man
goodwill."

No fisherman sat beside the lynn,
No sportsman in his butt;
Bare were the beaches and the Binn
And the golf-course greens uncut;
There was never a soul at the shooting-lodge and the
Grand Hotel was shut;

And Scotland was such a heavenly place,
So peaceable and content,
Without sweet Summer's hustle and chase
And merciless merriment;
And wasn't I happy to see her so, and wasn't I glad I went!

"Come South! Come South!" And the blue and the
gold,
All of it doubtless good;
But, ah! my steel-grey silent cold
Northerly solitude,
And a falling frost on a Scottish moor and a wintry Scottish
wood!

And when sweet Summer comes North again
(*With* all sweet Summer's crew)
Kindly will I remember then
That peaceable place I knew
While December turned to January and the Old Year to
the New.

H. B.

All My Eye

LET me begin by drawing what seems to be a necessary distinction between the oculist and the optician, pillars of society whom too many people are still confusing. For the benefit of those confusers it should be stated that the oculist is the professional man with a medical upbringing and various degrees who decides on the kind of glasses that you require; the optician is the artificer who makes them. You go to the oculist first, and then, with what is called the prescription, you go to whatever optician is commended and wait patiently, or as patiently as you can, until attention arrives.

Since in my youth I did not need artificial aids to vision, I cannot say what the opticians of the past were like; but they are now suave and courtly young men, well but quietly dressed, who, in due course, receive you in distinguished shops in the Wigmore Street vicinity, in an atmosphere, if not actually of sanctity, of an almost pious sobriety, and, seated on the other side of one of the little tables (each of the others being similarly occupied), subject your eyes and the bridge of your nose to delicate scrutiny and measurings. Whether these young men are, after hours, capable of frolic, I cannot affirm; but I hope they are. They deserve it.

Returning to the theme of medical men, I remember that somewhere an author who is not read to-day so much as he should be—R. L. STEVENSON—remarks on the very noticeable difference between the practitioner as we know him, discreet, tidy, temperate, business-like and capable, and the same person in the state of pupillage: a tousled rowdy irresponsible youth excessively addicted to relaxation. STEVENSON goes on to say that, taking into consideration the brevity of the immature student's career and the length of the career of the mature medical man which normally follows it, we ought to be very sympathetic to the chrysalis. I hope we are; and I thought of the matter again while waiting for an optician to be free to glance in my direction. Looking at the young men seated at the tables about me, I could not believe that any of them ever had been more jocund than they were at the moment, or would, save for age, ever differ.

But I may be wrong; indeed, I often am. There may even be an Opticians' Dramatic Society; there may even be, beside one of those new roads that lead out of London between rows of villas for which the purchasers pay 19/11 a week for years and years, a track of grass-land still unbuilt on, labelled "Opticians' Sports Ground." But I doubt it.

In this matter of glasses, to be examined by the oculist is almost fun. For one thing, you have no fear of pain. No one will falsely affirm, "I am not going to hurt you," or say, "Kindly raise your hand if you feel anything." Then there are the oculist's amusing adjuncts—the rows of letters in big and decreasing types that you have to try to read; the coloured lights that you look at; the various lenses that you test and the various delicate machines that are applied. Oculists are, I find, charming men, and, instead of postponing and postponing, we ought to go to them quite often. They can even take a joke; perhaps make one.

But opticians, no. They are frightening. They never smile. They confront you squarely and peer with such purposefulness.

Well, after many minutes I was, at last, in a kind of holy serenity, examined and fitted by the optician, and then, in the course of a few days, I received my glasses. While putting them on I dropped them, trod on them and crushed them to atoms.

For the moment, therefore, I am again comparatively blind. E. V. L.

Further Conversations with an Employer

"COME in, Miss Pin, and give me your full and candid opinion without a moment's delay, and if you have anything to say about the temperature of this room—and I see by your face that you have—let me beg of you to defer it for the moment and to remember that my only hope—my one and only hope in this world—of staving off pneumonia in this abominable climate is to avoid the faintest breath of air anywhere at all. If you, on the other hand, in that healthy Girl-Guide way of yours, require a howling gale and a temperature below zero in order to exist in comfort, I can only suggest that I should, however reluctantly, dispense with your attendance for some three-quarters of the year."

"Not at all, Mr. Pancatto. I've brought your tobacco, and the foolscap envelopes, and the typescript of your Interior Decoration article."

"Then nothing whatever remains but for you to tell me, with the most complete and absolute frankness, what you think of Z. K. Wallaby's suggestion that he and I should collaborate over the dramatisation of my *Gentleman into Wardrobe*. Naturally, as I told him at the time, I can be nothing less than overwhelmed with gratification at such a proposal coming from such a man as Z. K. Wallaby, for whom nobody on earth, be he who he may, can have a more wholehearted admiration than I. And I may add that if anybody twenty-five years ago had ever suggested that I should so much as *breathe the same air* as Z. K. Wallaby it would have appeared to me wholly incredible."

"The only thing, Mr. Pancatto, if I may say so——"

"Say what you will, Miss Pin. I am resigned to anything. You mean that Z. K. Wallaby was undoubtedly either off his head or in the final stages of intoxication when he advanced his proposal? You feel—rightly, no doubt—that no man of his eminence could ever have contemplated anything of the kind unless bereft of all power of rational thinking? Very well. Let the whole thing end there. I shall never mention the subject again, and I must request you to observe a similar discretion. We will turn our attention to the day's correspondence—and a very discouraging collection it is, too. Why these tradespeople should clamour as they do for payment is entirely beyond me. Miss Pin, why do you hesitate?"

"I was just thinking about *Gentleman into Wardrobe* as a play."

"And you doubtless visualised it as a roaring farce. I was prepared for something of the kind."

"No, no, not at all. Something quite different."

"If you suggest that *Gentleman into Wardrobe* is of the material of tragedy I have failed even more completely than I supposed. It will doubtless astonish you to learn, Miss Pin, that Z. K. Wallaby saw it as a comedy in three Acts."

"Is that how you see it too?"

"Most certainly it is. Who am I to know better than the greatest living dramatist of the age? As I said to him, 'Wallaby,' I said, 'I am in your hands. Do what you will.'"

"And is he going to alter the book much?"

"Good heavens, Miss Pin, alter the book? My worst enemy, I believe, would hardly call me a difficult man, but there are certain outrages that no living author can be expected to endure. (One of them, quite incidentally, is the smell of fried fish, and I must definitely insist upon having that



"Did you see the Belisha crossing?"
"No, Sir. I never seed nobody crossing."

door at the head of the stairs kept shut.) I shall stipulate, once and for all, that the *whole* of the dialogue is to be written by myself."

"Will Mr. Wallaby mind that?"

"How can I tell you what Mr. Wallaby will mind? Be reasonable, Miss Pin, I beg. I ask you to give me a simple straightforward opinion as to this proposed collaboration, and all you can do is to propound unanswerable conundrums. You would, if I may offer a suggestion, be far better employed in drafting an agreement between my collaborator and myself. Remember that my only wish is to consult his convenience in every way, and that I make no stipulations whatever excepting that no one but myself is to touch the dialogue, that it will be quite impossible for me to begin work before next August, and that no single word in the story is to be altered without my express permission."

"I see."

"You think the whole thing is foredoomed to failure. Don't attempt to deny it—I can see it plainly in your face. Very well. I must now ask you to give me a full and candid statement of your entire reaction to the scheme. Speak, Miss Pin, frankly and openly, without sparing my feelings. The morning is before us. What, in the name of Heaven, are you hesitating about?"

E. M. D.

"Germany's Corn Problem."
Daily Paper.

We hope no pressure is being brought to bear on this.

"Fish Laying Meal (for Poultry) . . 17/-"
Trade Catalogue.

Would this be a Fish Server?



"YES, HE'S A PROFESSIONAL FEEDER—HE WORKS IN TRAFALGAR SQUARE."

Such as Sleep o' Nights

THE case of the young lady in Brazil who has slept without intermission for five years and still shows no sign of reaching out for her morning tea is of interest in that it proves that such marathon slumbers are not, after all, confined exclusively to Government officials.

Five years, it will readily be admitted by all but the most grudging, is a goodly nap, and one well calculated to cause the slumberer to arise much refreshed and in fit condition to face once more the rigours of the day. However, it is a moot question whether sleep on the grand scale is really worth the candle—or rather the nightlight.

Let us suppose that *we* had fallen asleep five years ago and had successfully ignored the alarum-clock until to-day. What should we find on waking? First, that we were in urgent need of a shave. Second, a fairly comprehensive series of income-tax demands. Third, that the accumulation of milk-bottles outside, starting from the doorstep, had reached the end of the street, turned the corner, wandered up town, and was well on the way to completing the round trip. Fourth, that we had enough morning papers to read on our trips to the City on the 8.20 to see us through the remainder of our business career. Fifth, that the special Inquiry Committee set up by the House of Commons before we dropped off was on the point of promising to present its eagerly-awaited report at an early date. Sixth, that we were about ready for breakfast.

Well, really, it would be enough to make us turn over and go to sleep again, wouldn't it?

Myself, I don't speak on the subject as an expert. Whilst not altogether without experience in sleeping, my activities in this respect have mostly been limited to the standard eight hours at night, twenty minutes' overtime after being knocked up (for I am not one of your niggardly clock-watchers), a little quiet research in the armchair after lunch, and an additional siesta in the evening with the assistance of the talks on the radio. For an amateur it is not a bad record. Nevertheless, for sheer inspired consistency it doesn't compare with the all-in sleeper of Brazil.

I must say, though, I should like to see her repeat her act on some of the mattresses on which I have slept—or, to be accurate, passed the night—at the seaside during past summers. In such circumstances, unquestionably gifted slumberer though she is, I query very strongly her ability to give a satisfactory encore performance. By strict attention to duty she might manage to drop off for six or eight months, but that's the best I see her doing. Sleep is apt to be fitful when conducted on a bed bearing a close family resemblance to a relief map of the Outer Hebrides.

And it is in no carping spirit that I point out that five years, whilst a most commendable effort, is far from being a world record, and she has a long way to go if she is to take her place among the wonder-sleepers of all time. She must remember that she is up against such notable sleepers as for instance the Seven Sleepers, who remained in occupation of the bedclothes for three-hundred-and-nine

years on Mount Celion, where the sleeping seems to have been pretty good. This is a record that will take some beating, and only goes to show the value of team-work. Jealous rivals have sneeringly hinted that the sleeping was not continuous but was got through in relays, every member of the team doing six four-hour shifts a week. This is calumny. The sleeping was done in concert, and stands as a brilliant example of united effort.

Of solo performances the best seems to be that of Epimenides the Gnostic, who put up a fine show for fifty-seven years, by which time the last of his creditors had passed away and he woke up. Rip Van Winkle, a household name to all ambitious sleepers, lacked staying-power, and twenty years was the best he could manage; whilst St. David only just succeeded in qualifying for mention with a forty-winks of seven years.

In these records I have not included Gyneth, King Arthur's daughter, who took an outstanding snooze of five hundred years, since she was specially trained for the event by Merlin, the Court Magician, and it is doubtful whether this would be permitted under present-day regulations. Even allowing for this advantage, five hundred years is no mean stretch for a woman to keep quiet. But perhaps she talked in her sleep. Even a magician can only do just so much.

However, all these giants of the game having now hung up their gloves, it looks as though the lady from Brazil gets the world's sleeping title in a lie-over, unless we do something about it. And I really think for the sake of our national prestige we ought to make some effort. Somewhere in our midst we must have a potential champion. Let us peer hither and thither among our heavyweight boxers and such likely fields and see what we can find. Somewhere perhaps we have a naturalised Esquimau, already accustomed to climbing between the sheets and staying put for six months. That's the kind of material we want. Quite recently I came across a youngster of much promise who was doing really well until the exchange woke him up to ask him if he'd mind repeating the number.

Staged, say, at Wembley, a contest for the World's Sleeping Championship would arouse enormous popular interest. The idea is full of possibilities. It should be certain of a run that would make entertainment history and cause *Chu Chin Chow* to look like a one-night stand. Season-tickets for admittance would become treasured heir-looms, handed down from father to son. Nightly thousands would throng the arena, and millions more would listen with breathless interest to the B.B.C. commentator:—

"Smith of Great Britain (Square One) is sleeping very well. The champion (Square Two) is also putting up a fine display. There is nothing to choose between the two men. Both are in the pink of condition. The champion's manager this morning issued an official denial of the rumour that his man is suffering from night-starvation, and the betting has recovered. Smith is snoring twelve to the minute. Can he keep it up? The champion is not snoring at all, yet. He is evidently keeping something in reserve. They are both still sleeping. Smith's manager is making signs for another blanket. Smith is making a spurt—he has increased his rate of snoring to fifteen. One–two–three–four–one–two–three–four–in–out–in–out. I like the look of this boy. They are both still sleeping. According to form the champion is due to turn over in his sleep any day now, and the crowds are flocking in to see it. Oh, well slept, Smith! A fly settled on his nose, but he just carried right on. They are both still sleeping. There! Did you hear that applause? That was for a beautiful bit of sleeping by the champion. They are both still . . ."

It sounds a good life to me. Do you know, I'm feeling just a bit drowsy myself. I believe I'll go and lie down for a little. If you don't hear any more of me for another seven years you might claim the title on my behalf.

Good night everybody. . . .



Tattooist. "Of course this is only a rough sketch so far, Sir."



"AND WHAT DOES A IRRECONCILABLE QUARREL MATTER IN A REALLY 'APPY MARRIAGE?"

Loafers and Fishers

Mon. Sept. 7th.—Charles and I arrived Vouzela (11.15) for a week's fishing. Charming old-world Portuguese village high up in the Beira Alta. Apparently whole village in the know, as chorus of hearty welcome from assembled peasants in picturesque costumes on getting out of little narrow-gauge train. My welcome nothing to that of Charles, who follows, in shorts and stockings, carrying rods, and is greeted with shouts of rapture. Sturdy peasants roar applause, and bevy of dark pretty girls shriek welcome. Charles rather staggered and bows acknowledgment. Bevy of dark pretty girls fall about board platform with squeals of mirth.

Proceed to Pensão Santos, followed by ceremonial procession of entire population, which continues to hang about the courtyard all the rest of the day. Senhor Almaz, dear old fellow, rosy and beaming, is proprietor, and bestows on us the freedom of the village. Speech of mayor in courtyard (something about "oldest allies") interrupted by appearance of three of the "Policia Nationale" (grey uniforms, red facings, jackboots with spurs), who demand passports. Hand them our new passports with pardonable pride, and they fill first four pages with comments, memoranda and rubber stampings. They depart, after apparently warning Senhor Almaz against us. Very stern blokes.

Dinner by candle-light in garden, under massive bunches of grapes on vines. Sextet of shirt-sleeved bandits in black hats (accordion, two guitars, one saxophone, two mouth-organs) appear from behind clump of hollyhocks and serenade us during coffee with endless repetition of curiously familiar tune in very slow time.

Charles rather morose. Discover reason. Whisky unknown in Vouzela. Try red wine. Try white wine. Try port. Try "vignac." Charles still morose. Let "aguardiente" try us. Charles less morose. Give "aguardiente" a free hand and Charles admits it would be a charming spot, with whisky.

Tues. Sept. 8th.—Charles and I awakened at eight A.M. by hoarse military commands in courtyard and sound of rifle-butts on cobblestones. Nothing to worry about, however—merely squad of "Policia Internationale" (green uniforms, grey képis, field-boots) to examine our passports and check up on "Policia Nationale." Fill up further four pages of passports and request paternal grandmother's maiden name for Government files in Lisbon. Charles—a little uncertain of his facts—excites suspicion.

Fished upper Vouga all day, Charles taking stretch above Ponte Romana. Fourteen trout averaging just under a pound. Charles back about five with nothing. Says he was escorted by larger bevy of dark pretty girls, who ogled him from other bank of stream and whose laughter scared fish for miles. (Says he thinks it must be his unusual physique as compared with their own men—Charles being tall and plump, red and about fifteen stone.)

Touching and joyous incident in evening. Old Almaz, with air of conferring knighthood, produces bottle of well-known Scotch whisky. Charles overjoyed. Dear old Almaz has

travelled twenty-five miles to Vizeu by ox-cart to get it. Charles overwhelmed and asks price. Both of us overwhelmed, as Almaz says price is 25 escudos (about 4/6). Age of miracles apparently not yet passed.

Jolly dinner under the vines, chastened by arrival of reinforced band (reinforcement, one cornet), who give prolonged rendering of same tune in solo parts, massed effect, etc. Irritatingly familiar and played in slowest of slow time. Explain with great difficulty that we are not very fond of music and that there is red wine waiting for them in the bar of Pensâo.

Wednesday, Sept. 9th.—Charles insists on taking upper reaches of the Vouga. I take lower, with fairly good results. Distant sound of revelry all day. Charles back about four—raving—no fish. Says hordes of peasants and dark pretty girls camped out and held a *fiesta* on opposite bank to him.

Summon Senhor Almaz, who makes apologetic and long-winded explanation. Apparently shorts and stockings considered correct wear for little boys not over four, and the pink knees of Charles—suggesting juvenile fat boy—altogether too good to be missed. Almaz says villagers prefer Charles to annual circus. Charles furious.

Learn from Almaz that feelings of band very hurt. Learn also that music hitherto supplied was Portuguese interpretation of "God Save the King," hurriedly learned in our honour on the day of our arrival. Try to explain that "God Save the King" very right and proper and all that, but better as a finale than as a whole opera. Tell him also that in England we have other music as well.

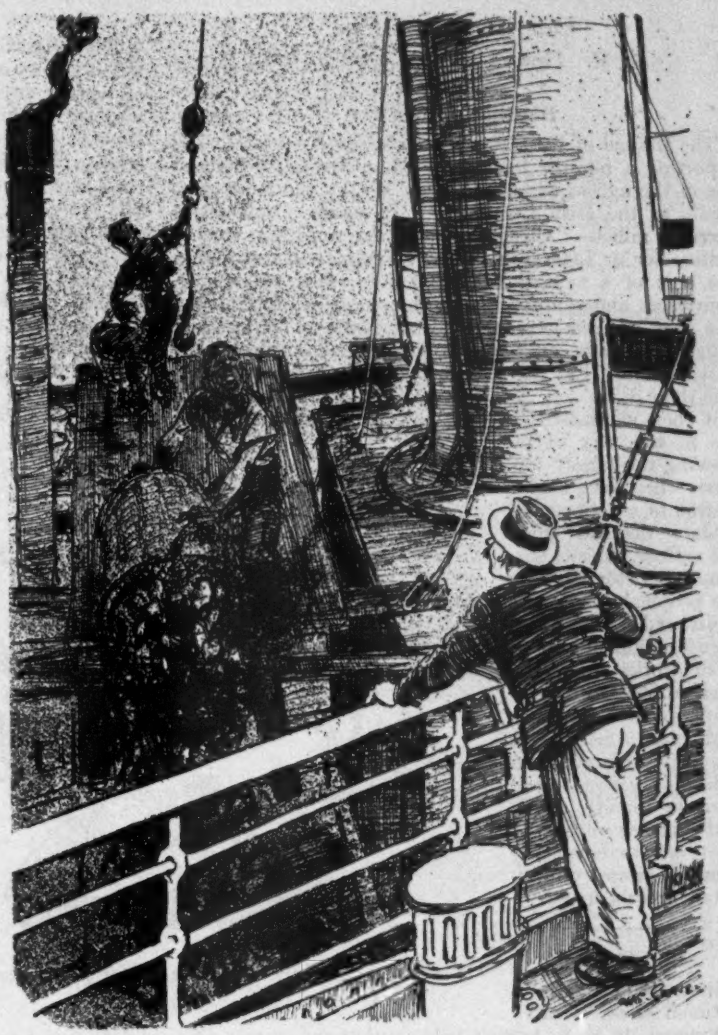
Two bottles of whisky ordered from Vizeu. Almaz mysteriously perturbed about it.

Thursday, Sept. 10th.—Charles goes fishing in flannel bags. Great disappointment among villagers gathered round entrance of Pensâo. Charles reappears at 11 A.M. in custody of two of the "Policia Civile" (dark-blue uniforms, patent leather three-cornered hats). Says he was arrested for taking a snap of the Roman bridge. Camera seized by police. Camera restored after three rounds of "aguardiente" and much hand-shaking.

Senhor Almaz back from Vizeu with two bottles of whisky. Apparently very depressed—something on his mind. Charles has bright idea: as whisky so amazingly cheap, better have a case to take away with us on Saturday. Convey this to Senhor Almaz, who bursts into tears and hurries away wringing his hands. Very queer.

Friday, Sept. 11th.—Gloom in the Pensâo. Almaz, with severe nervous breakdown, sends for Charles and self and makes deathbed confession. Original bottle of whisky cost him seventy-five escudos (13/9) at Vizeu; afraid of being accused of profiteering on such stupendous sum, he cut it to 4/6. Subsequent two bottles heavy loss. Last night's demand for a case means mortgaging the Pensâo. Charles and I much touched and promise to put things right financially.

Rapid recovery of Almaz, who presents Charles with bottle of port he says was left behind by WELLINGTON.



"'OW GOES IT, BILL?"
"NOT SO DUSTY, LAD."

Saturday, Sept. 12th.—Leaving Vouzela by only down-train of day (2.10 P.M.). Charles thinks shorts cooler for stuffy train. News gets round. On his appearance in street, rocket goes up and fire-bell is rung. Rapturous applause. Vouzela itself again. Bevy of dark pretty girls appear, fall in behind Charles and accompany him to station. Charles very embarrassed.

Arrive station 1.50. At 2 P.M. both arrested on station platform by five of "Policia Uncivile" on charge of not having notified police of our arrival in Vouzela. Train comes in. Taken to "Estacâo Policia" and fined ten shillings each. Meanwhile train gone out. Ask what time Sunday's train. No train on Sunday. Return to Pensâo till Monday.

T. R. H.

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Distressful Country

The Ireland of 1845, starving on blighted potatoes while exporting a bumper harvest of grain, illustrates perhaps one of the ugliest pages in English history and is no great credit to the Irish themselves. It makes a sufficiently horrible milieu—"background" is no word for such a welter—for Mr. LIAM O'FLAHERTY's *Famine* (GOLLANCZ, 8/6), the epic of a typical peasant family, their neighbours, oppressors and sympathisers. The old *Kilmartins*, living, like most of their kind, on land not good enough for their conquerors, have but the bare bones of subsistence at the best of times. The pigs and hens—which they house alongside their dying son, *Michael*—are earmarked for the rent. But their eldest-born, *Martin*, and his gallant young wife are in the way of retrieving the family fortunes when rain, blight, distraints, evictions and typhus descend upon the valley. Priests, parson and doctor stand by the people, but absentee landlords, drunken agents, muddled English relief works and foxy Irish profiteering in foodstuffs write death—or, with luck, America—as the inevitable end. A *pointilliste* canvas this of horrible sounds, scents and touches placed to relate only too eloquently a tale of almost unmitigated wretchedness.



Miss Zeppa. "GO ON READING OUT; I JUST LOVE ADVENTURE STORIES."

Hot Plunge

In a world where international trade is sadly hampered Mr. H. S. ASHTON believes that our present difficulties result mainly from the breakdown of a credit system whose restoration is essential to the mutual welfare of all of us, and declares that it is the special duty of Great Britain as the foremost middleman among the nations to devise a scheme to facilitate the free flow of raw materials. In *Clamour for Colonies* (THORNTON BUTTERWORTH, 8/6) he denies that any country is forced to go short of commodities for lack of adequate tropical possessions, and, ascribing the familiar hunger for territorial expansion to simple natural aggressiveness, applauds the resolution of little Holland's statesmen never to surrender one inch of her immense East Indies. Mr. ASHTON's writing is irritatingly exclamatory in several languages: at times he brings forth banal observations with quite an air of discovery, and, perhaps inevitably, since he is pleading a special case through the fringes of the Free Trade controversy and a score of other contested questions, he does not escape some apparent contradictions. His work has the merit, however, of a genuine attempt to face an issue that is very much alive.

Patres Vocantur . . .

The unsatisfactory brand of celibate of whom ERASMUS wrote, "They are called Fathers and they often are," has an equally unpleasant antitype in the married ecclesiastic who neglects his job or his family. A biography exclusively devoted to a missionary of the latter stamp is dreary reading; but Mrs. PEARL BUCK manages to sustain a fairly constant admiration for that ruthless evangelist, her father. She has already, I gather, described her mother in *Exile*; yet the heroine of *Fighting Angel* (METHUEN, 7/6) is still the luckless CARIE, dragged from one Chinese outpost to another with a continually increasing family as continually thinned by its head's astonishing lack of consideration. The American origins of this savagery are depicted by way of a prelude—a pugnacious household of preachers and farmers in Virginia. But most of the action—ANDREW's action and his family's endurance—takes place in China before, during and after the Boxer Rising. His biographer vouches for ANDREW's "burning integrity"; but his wife, I think, voices the apter verdict: "I always said Andrew had a happy life. God always seemed to have told him to do what he would have wanted to do anyway."

Art for Who's Sake?

When a young man wearing a fisherman's high-necked jersey, paint-stained trousers and stubble on his chin is taken home by his pretty and almost ordinary *fiancée* he is not likely to charm his future father-in-law, a retired Colonel. *Stephen* did not, especially as he refused to consider any job that might bring in the required four hundred a year—this not only for Art's sake, but because farm-labourers could marry on thirty shillings a week, and he thought he was a practical Communist. Somehow Mr. WYNYARD BROWNE has managed to make this savage and foolish "intellectual" into quite a likeable person—probably because he invites us to laugh at him. But most of the people in the book are likeable and unintentionally (though never from the author's point of view) funny. In *The Fire and the Fiddle* (COBDEN-SANDERSON, 7/6) two confused worlds meet and are very contemptuous of one another. They are both shocked—one because of the old ideas and one because of the new (and here it should be said that some of the new world's speech may shock some readers). Yet Mr. WYNYARD BROWNE makes all his characters (with the exception of *Jean*, the girl, who is not so easy) clear and recognisable. He takes nothing too seriously and writes wisely and wittily. I shall read the book again and I know I shall laugh again.

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Charivaria

WE are told that the only relaxation of one of our most famous scientists is croquet. So that's how he makes hoopee.



★ ★ ★

Two hundred poultry-farmers are to visit London this month to see the very latest thing in intensive hen-houses. Up for the coop, in fact.

★ ★ ★

While fishing a canal near Stirling an angler hooked a wallet containing three ten-shilling notes and two one-pound notes. We hope he threw the small ones back.

★ ★ ★



A large rock which rolled down a Persian mountainside struck an inn and damaged it badly. Most of the regular customers, however, remained staunchly faithful to their battered caravanserai.

★ ★ ★

"Some convicts conceive a strong affection for their temporary 'home,'" declares a prison official. Little brown jug, don't I love thee!

★ ★ ★

A jay-walker who was recently reprimanded in a London court gave his name as Hope. Presumably he sprang eternal.

★ ★ ★

It is perhaps as well that all the foreigners who praise our unfaltering calm in the face of crises are not present when the Test scores come through.

★ ★ ★

"Musicians are tidy people," a music critic inform us. It is always pleasant to see a 'cellist going round picking up scraps of paper with the spike of his instrument.

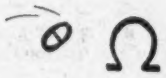
★ ★ ★

"Where would London be without Chelsea?" asks a book-reviewer. Or Chelsea, if it comes to that.



A housemaid has complained in court that a policeman tried to put his arm round her waist three times. The long arm of the law was thus brought home to her with a vengeance.

★ ★ ★



A believer in reincarnation has discovered that Mr. BALDWIN was a Carthaginian at the time of HANNIBAL'S campaign against Italy. Signor MUSSOLINI, however, is of the opinion that bygones had better be bygones.

★ ★ ★

Electric fans are now being employed for refreshing boxers between rounds. Towels, however, are still used for throwing-in.

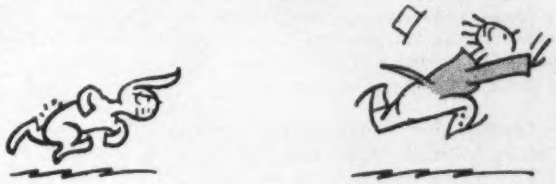
★ ★ ★

An American artist has painted a miniature of Herr HITLER, the picture being about the size of a threepenny-bit. The moustache must be really *quite* miniature.

★ ★ ★

Cats are said to be suffering from a form of influenza. That is why mice are avoiding them so markedly.

★ ★ ★



A stockbroker affirms that he was once stung by a jellyfish. So apparently even a small investor *will* turn.

★ ★ ★

"The Ming dynasty ruled China for less than three hundred years," states an historian. So we were wrong in thinking that Chinese history was just one dam Ming after another.

★ ★ ★

"Army Manœuvres in Portugal," runs a headline. This is quite a change. We understood that most of the Powers were using Spain for this purpose.

★ ★ ★

"How should I go about making a bird bath?" asks a "Nature-column" correspondent. Duck the little blighter.

A Treat for Posterity

EVERY now and again, from the welter of political verbiage poured out on party platforms or at Annual Banquets, there emerges a phrase that is sure to live. It matters not in the least whether a welter can or cannot be poured out, the sense is clear and the fact remains. Once in ten or twenty years perhaps the mountains labour and bring forth, not the customary laughable mouse but a verbal prodigy predestined, unlike most prodigies, to increase in weight and lustre as the years go on. "Bag and baggage" was one such, "Three acres and a cow" another, "A country fit for heroes to live in" a very good third. And of their illustrious company unquestionably is the remark of the Foreign Secretary at the Annual Dinner of the Foreign Press Association a week ago. "We definitely," said Mr. EDEN, "prefer butter to guns."

It will be noticed that it is far from easy to say exactly why this statement is so obviously memorable. Its greatness, in common with that of nearly all the brightest gems in the English language, has the quality of indefinability. Who can put his finger on the charm of COLERIDGE'S

> *"Through caverns measureless to man*
> *Down to a sunless sea,"*

or analyse the attraction of

> *"The mountains look on Marathon*
> *And Marathon looks on the sea"* ?

The reader can only say that the lines appeal to him and that any alteration, even of a single word, would be unthinkable. So it is with Mr. EDEN'S inspired utterance. Try substituting "pork-chops" for "butter" and you will see what I mean. The thing is stillborn. Even to put "rifles" for "guns" is little better. "We definitely prefer butter to rifles"—at once we are in the realms of the commonplace.

Not, it is saddening to reflect, that such obvious truths as these will save the sentence from misquotation by posterity. In thirty years' time, more or less, the correspondence columns of *The Sunday Times* will surely echo to some such strains as these:—

SIR,—Your correspondent "CANDIDUS," in his interesting reference to Mr. EDEN'S famous "Butter or guns" speech, has fallen into the common error of supposing the then Foreign Secretary to have said, "We would rather have butter than guns any day." The actual words used were "Butter is better than guns any day," an obvious improvement on the current (incorrect) version.

Someone else will promptly write to point out, not without a certain irony, that "In Vino Veritas" has fallen into the still more common error of failing to verify his references. As one who was privileged to be present on the occasion in question, he will add, he is in a position to state that the Foreign Secretary's own words were, "Butter is *definitely* better than guns," special emphasis being laid on the word "definitely." And so the dispute will drag on, until at last the fatal words "according to *Hansard*" will bring the correspondence to a close and Truth will be enthroned for another brief spell on her precarious pedestal.

Already, as a matter of fact, it is possible to discern the seeds of dissolution. In an evening paper published on the day after the speech was made appeared these words:

> *"Mr. Eden, the Foreign Secretary, said in a speech in London last night that England believed in butter rather than guns."*

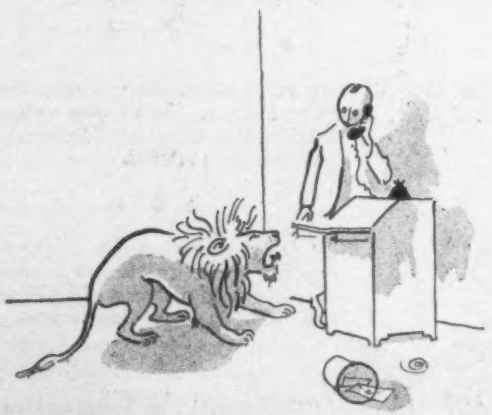
There followed a typically German comment from the *Boersen Zeitung* with which we need not bother. The point is that the sentence quoted, though a reasonably accurate transliteration of what was actually said, is yet dangerously misleading. It is really a kind of very oblique *oratio*, but the casual reader, unaware of the extent of its obliquity, will readily translate it into *oratio recta* as "England believes in butter rather than guns." He will go away firmly convinced that this is what the Foreign Secretary said, and in thirty years' time will in all probability be writing angrily to *The Sunday Times* to that effect. Oh (as has been said so frequently in recent months), the pity of it!

It may be—and if these words are of any comfort to the Foreign Secretary we shall not have written in vain—that to be misquoted, as to be parodied, is the true hall-mark of greatness. It is a fair assumption that a line which never appears incorrectly in print is only known to and used by the learned or the well-librariied. The phrase or period so telling that even the miserable man in the street is unable to pass it by suffers inevitable mutilation. What did DISRAELI say about the Whig Front Bench? You are prepared to give an answer of some sort, are you not? Will you agree with me that he said, "There they sit—a row of extinct volcanoes"? You will? Excellent. But it appears that what he did in fact say was "You behold a range of exhausted volcanoes."

So let it be with EDEN. The butter and the guns will endure, though the "definitely" and the "prefer" may pass away. And even they will not be utterly lost. For the curious, turning in the years to come to their *Compendium of Popular and Apt Quotations*, will find the whole thing fully and fairly set down—

"We definitely prefer butter to guns."

Probably by then it will be truer than ever. H. F. E.

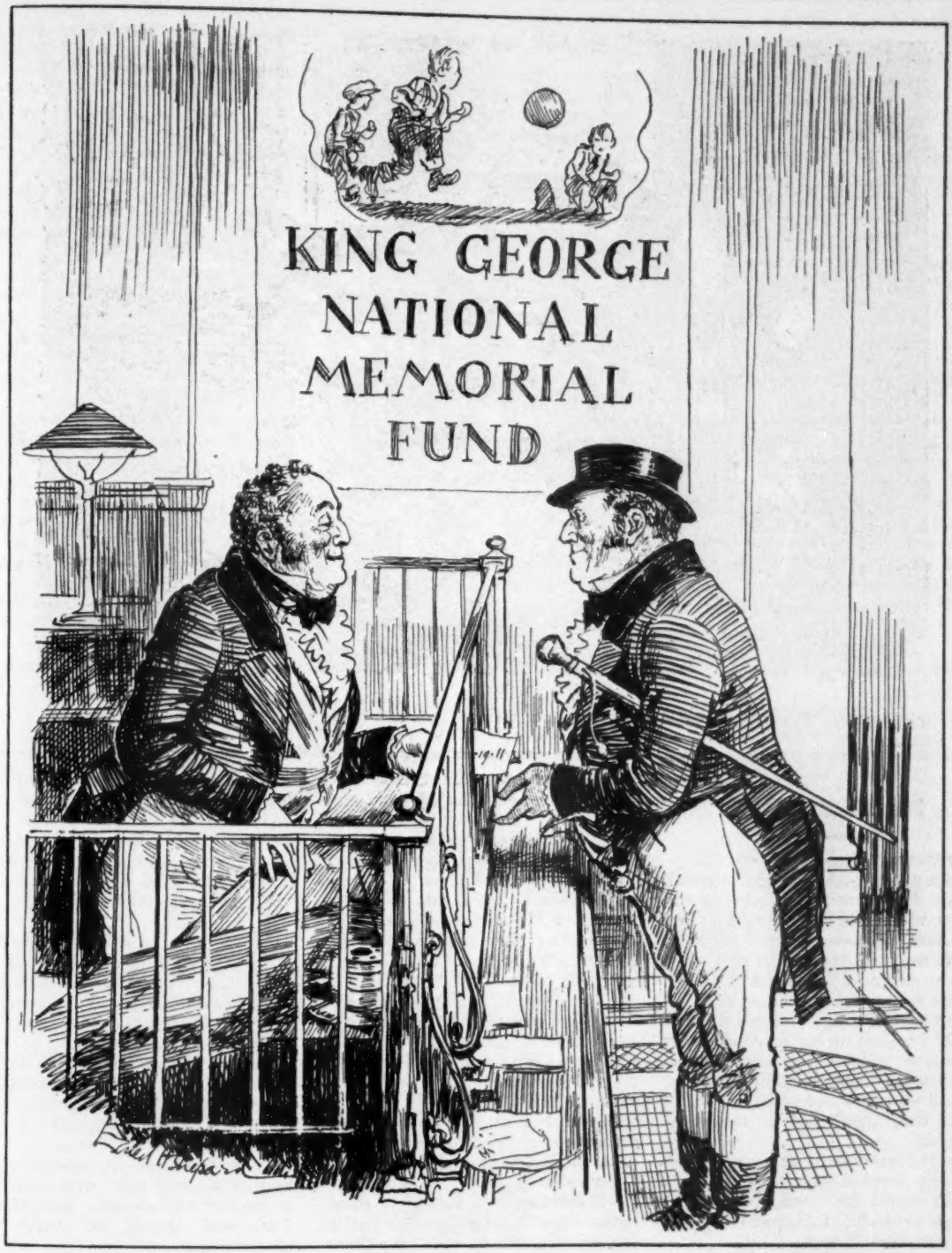


"IS THAT THE ZOO? WELL, LOOK HERE—MY NAME'S HARRISON."

Things Which Might Have Been More Tactfully Expressed

"He believed that with the assistance of the ladies it would be possible to form a non-profit-making concern."
Report of Speech in Church Magazine.

"NAZI WARSHIP IN RED PORT."—*Evening Paper Poster.*
Is this the bilge we had to drink at Christmas?



CHANGE FOR THE BEST

THE BANKER. "I TRUST, SIR, YOU'RE GIVING ME THE ODD SHILLINGS AND PENCE?"
THE CLIENT. "YES; BUT SUPPOSE I HAVE AN OVERDRAFT?"
THE BANKER. "THAT'S ALL RIGHT, SIR, I CAN ADD JUST AS WELL AS I CAN SUBTRACT."



"You appear to be misinformed. Tap dancing has never been included in the curriculum of Westondean."

Fantasia Influenzia

Yesterday I spent in bed.

On my head rested a biggish load of bricks. My pillow was fitted with iron spikes which ran into my neck and shoulders from every angle, while all round me and inside the bed were unseen electrical machines radiating intense heat varied by icy cold.

You are quite right—I had flu.

Idly I picked up my morning's post—a couple of bills, a receipt (Heaven be praised!), a very belated Christmas-card all about robins from my eccentric cousin Ermyntrude, and a wine advertisement.

By the process of elimination the wine-list seemed the only one an invalid could be considered strong enough to study. I flapped the pages in a wan kind of way.

". . . A very delicate dry wine, in brilliant condition, with a choice muscatel bouquet. . . ." My fevered head grew cooler as I read. I had a vision of vine-covered slopes under a fresh September sky and the breeze just ruffling the silver Loire. ". . . A splendid generous Burgundy of a famous vintage, smooth and velvety. . . ." The very thought of it filled up the draughts all round my shoulders and soothed my aching back. I determined that I would go on reading wine-lists until I was quite well. But then I remembered that Uncle Percy was coming in twenty minutes, so I couldn't do that. Uncle Percy is very loud of voice and very red in face. He is corpulent and smells strongly of vintage pipes. Ah! Vintage . . . What was Uncle Percy's vintage, I wondered? But of course, how silly of me! Uncle Percy was a man, not a wine. I must be feverish again. I would try to get a little sleep before he arrived and perhaps I should feel more equal to his visit. I turned on my side.

Immediately I saw a gigantic wine-list before me, only instead of advertising wines it described my relations and friends. Uncle Percy, my Great-aunt Emily, from whom I had expectations (only that morning I had been anxiously wondering if by any chance she had flu, and if it would possibly be serious at her age), Cousin Ermyntrude, dear old George (no doubt the wine-list put me in mind of him), and young Peter, his son, who was rapidly following in father's footsteps—all were included. Even Daphne, dear little Daphne, whom I should have been taking out to dinner that very night, she was there too. I drew nearer and read with amazement—

Uncle Percy. A full-bodied well-developed man, dark-red in colour and very round. The bouquet is distinctive.

Great-aunt Emily. Pale, owing to great age, but of full strength and likely to keep for some years.

Cousin Ermyntrude. An unusual woman of a type that has somewhat gone out of fashion. Light-brown in colour and very intense; not too sweet but bright.

Dear Old George. A splendidly generous and fruity man, with character; at his best with dessert. Bottled since 1900 and should be drunk any moment now.

Young Peter. A fine sparkling young man with plenty of life. Has a great reputation in France and should improve with age; but at present lacks the finesse and style of the high-class product.

Daphne. A charming girl, delicate

and soft, and of a delicious silkiness. It would be difficult to find a more attractive after-dinner girl at the price.

I paused there, though my eye caught a later reference to our Vicar, who was described as "clean and smooth, and likely to become oily with age," which struck me as particularly apt. But I wanted to dwell on Daphne, "Delicate and soft . . ." What a good description! Why didn't one always think of one's friends in terms of wine? New Year's resolution . . . I would do so and see how much more delightful——

Here Uncle Percy was shown in, preceded some yards by his bouquet. I sat up with a start and a shock of general disillusionment passed over me. I realised that all the wine-lists were probably lying, and that some of the delectable wines I had read about should more likely have been described thus:—

"A second-class product, rough and unwholesome, with body composed mostly of sediment, and no real quality. The bouquet is cheap and unpleasant."

Incidentally, I decided that description almost exactly fitted Uncle Percy.

M. D.

Lament for the Makyrs

(According to a newspaper report from Hollywood, animals are now "blossoming into film stars." Pigs, pythons, alligators, buzzards and badgers are mentioned at lesser salaries; but a "nicely-mannered hippo can, and does, earn £20 a day.")

WE live in an astounding age
When daily from the printed page
Fresh marvels issue to engage
  Bewildered brain and sense;
Hark, if you please, to Hollywood,
Where now the brutes are making good
As movie stars whose magnitude
  Bids fair to be immense.

And not for nothing do they shine,
Badger and buzzard, snake and swine;
If their emoluments were mine,
  Oh, wouldn't I be gay!
But most of all that pampered lot
I do begrudge—oh, do I not!—
The nicely-mannered hippopot
  On twenty quid a day.

'Tis not that I despise the flicks,
Nor do I doubt the creature's tricks
Will cause a million fans to mix
  Astonishment with joy;
But when I think that those who ply
The lyre (as, for example, I)
Earn less than hippopotami—
  Oh boy, oh boy, oh boy!

Weep, all ye makyrs, weep with me
That such a state of things should be;
In parlous plight is poesie
  And ruin faces rhyme;
The hippo and cameleopard
Draw bigger money than the bard.
It's mighty tough? It's cruel hard?
  You said it. Every time. H. B.

Harry Preston Memorial

To perpetuate the memory of Sir HARRY PRESTON it has been decided to form a fund for the provision of a new Memorial Wing to the Royal Sussex Hospital, Brighton, which will bear his name. Friends of HARRY PRESTON and all who may wish to be associated with this tribute to his memory are invited to communicate with the Hon. Secretary, Harry Preston Memorial Wing, 162, Queen Victoria Street, E.C.4.



"MY HUSBAND'S BEEN SO DEPRESSED LATELY—HE'S NEVER HAPPY UNLESS HE IS MISERABLE, AND EVEN THEN HE'S NOT PLEASED."

Cash Returns

In times of national emergency or international tension those of us who get our living by crawling from phone-box to phone-box pressing Button B do fairly well.

"Us chaps," as I should make a point of saying if anyone interviewed me on the subject for "In Town To-Night"—"us chaps does all right when folks is preockipied—see? They forgets about their money, and—that—is—where—we—come"—(*sound of turning page*)—"in." After that I should tell a mild anecdote or two and finally fade out to the strains of the "Jewel Song" from *Faust* just as I was getting warmed up about my pet professional grievance.

For we have a grievance, and a serious one. Our lives are embittered by envy of our brothers in America. Compared with ours, their standard of living must be princely and their working time negligible.

We are judging of course from films. I don't remember ever having seen one of the Brotherhood actually portrayed in a film, but I have seen countless nickel-in-the-slot telephones; and, my word, what little nickel-mines they are for a strong healthy man! Indeed you don't even have to be strong and healthy; just alert at the right moment. There was a little film several months ago—I fancy it was *Miss Pacific Fleet*—in which every time Hugh Herbert went past a public telephone there was a loud clatter and a shower of coins fell into the tray underneath it.

But that was a rare case; as a rule you at least have to hit the thing. One of the most recent examples I recall was in the film *Wedding Present*. Cary Grant had been feeding nickels into the machine for a long time, making call after call; when at last he ran out of nickels all the man with him had to do was to hit the telephone a sharp glancing blow, and, *whoosh!* back they all came. I must say that the device by which this is managed, whatever it is, seems to me ideal.

Another point is that nearly all American automatic machines of whatever kind seem to have it. There was that cigarette-machine in *Swing Time*, for instance, which on being shaken a little disgorged not only a small cascade of coins but also an avalanche of cigarette-packets. That was a beautiful moment, if you like.

Against such automatic munificence in the United States what has this country to offer? The contrast is pitiable. You can tear a telephone-box to pieces without getting more than twopence, and very often, except in times of national emergency or international tension, without getting even that.

I won't deny that there have been wonderful isolated occasions on which I have known an English coin-in-the-slot telephone to loosen up a trifle. It is in letters of fire that I still see the date on which I tried, from a call-box in North London, to put through a begging telephone-call to Lord Nuffield (I had thought of getting eight hundred thousand pounds for a few little improvements about the garden), and nothing happened. Naturally I pressed Button B; and one (1) penny came back. A rapid calculation told me that there was still inside the instrument one (1) other penny belonging to me. I pressed Button B again—without violence, only a little truculently—and got sevenpence: seven pennies, one brand-new. None of these proved to be fairy gold either.

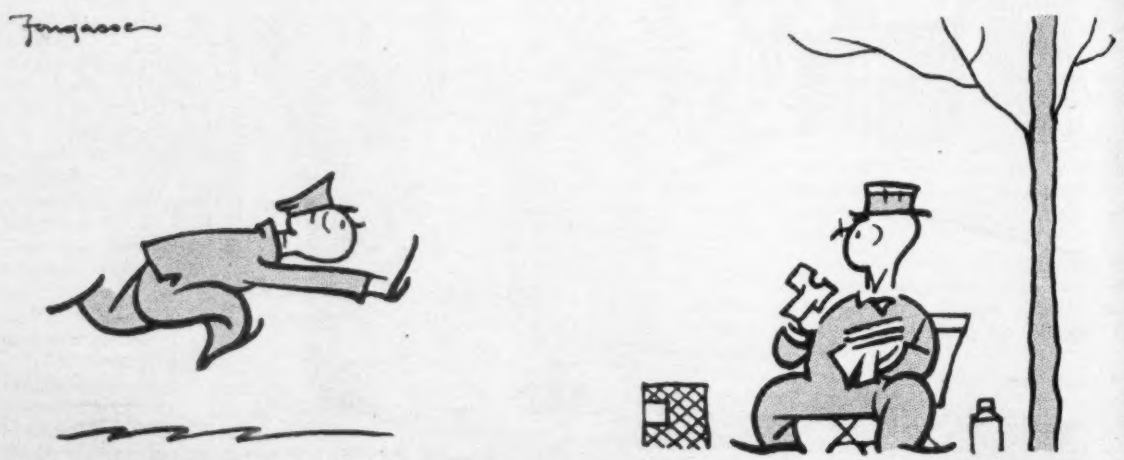
But this, as I say, is an isolated instance. The average English public telephone has no trace of that Transatlantic willingness to oblige. Assiduous film-goers have a number of conditioned reflexes, and just as by this time they can never see a really businesslike kiss-clinch without being perfectly certain that somebody is going to come through some curtains or open a door and interrupt it by saying "Ha!" or "Ho!" so they can never see a nickel-in-the-slot telephone struck without being perfectly certain that the striker will receive an immediate financial reward; but. . . .

(*The occasion calls for a new sentence, I think. Jenkyn, the '84 corkscrew!*)

But the sight of an English public telephone provokes no such psychological response. All they think of when they see an English public telephone is the operator saying "Nbplp?" or Button B, after being pushed in, sidling out again clikliklklick-click-click-click . . . click . . . click. And no pennies back.

That then is our grievance. Think of it the next time you press Button A and your coins plunge with a mocking clang into the maw of the Postmaster-General, never to return, beyond your reach and—unless we use dynamite—ours.

We don't complain. Or rather we do complain; but where does it get us? At the moment we—and by "we" I mean us chaps—are, as I say, doing fairly well, and a casual



"There's a moose loose!"
"Are you English or Scots?"

glance at the headlines about the ultimatum situation, and the stop-press international volunteer scores, suggests that we shall be doing fairly well for quite a while yet. But once let European affairs settle down and things will be serious for us once more. Only the thought of the harvest during Coronation Week keeps some of us from emigrating to that land of opportunity where no man need starve beside a telephone if he knows where to hit it.

R. M.

Poor Yorick

THE wit of the London bus-conductor is of course as proverbial as the wonderfulness of the London policeman, and until recently there was no wittier bus-conductor than the man with the rather untidy ginger moustache who conducts my No. 38A to the office every morning. To quote the young lady who snuffles, he was "a perfect scream." His passengers felt that in paying their fares they were not merely paying to have their carcases transported but were purchasing tickets for a high-class vaudeville entertainment.

Then a few weeks ago we began to notice a change. The untidy ginger moustache no longer seemed to bristle with good-humour; it just drooped. The bright all-seeing eyes became as the eyes of a cod. Pomposity was safe from the mock-deference of the ready tongue. Cheeky young men who had chosen this particular bus to enjoy a passage-at-arms took to going by Underground in despair. Ours is a "late" bus and sufficiently uncrowded for the "regulars" to have developed a certain camaraderie, and the other day the lady who snuffles remarked to the gentleman with the green pork-pie hat that our conductor had seemed a bit off-colour lately.

"I thought it was flu at first," she said, "but it's lasted too long for that."

"He certainly *is* a changed man," said the man in the very long overcoat who looks like an author. "I'm wondering if he has lost some near and dear relation. He hasn't made a joke of any kind since before Christmas. Not since the time when the man got on carrying two bowls of goldfish. He raised a rare laugh *that* morning."

"It was a perfect scream," said the young lady who chews gum.

We all remembered the incident and smiled appreciatively. Personally I couldn't remember exactly what he had said, but at the time it had tickled me immensely. The young lady who chews gum said that *she* couldn't remember exactly what he had said, but of course it was the way he said it. When the conductor came up the young lady who snuffles said to him: "We were just talking about that time when the man with the two bowls of goldfish got on to the bus and you raised such a laugh. What was it you said, exactly?"

The conductor groaned hollowly and seemed about to crumple, but the moment of weakness soon passed and he took our fares with a wan smile.

"I can't remember what I said to the man with the bowls of goldfish," he said in a voice of gentle melancholy. "Nor can I remember the superb wisecrack I made when the negro gentleman with the bowler-hat trod on my toe just past Dalston Junction last June."

"It was a perfect scream," said the young lady who snuffles.

"Undoubtedly it was a perfect scream, but I can't for the life of me remember what it was I said. Nor can I call to mind the exact words with which I crushed the boy smoking a cigar who asked for a penny 'child's,' or the slab of scintillating wit I ejected when in the fog of November, '35 we were forty minutes getting from Whipp's Cross to the 'Bakers' Arms.' You may have noticed that I have seemed a little sad lately, and it is all due to these evening papers offering prizes for humorous incidents connected with London Transport. 'At five bob a time,' my wife said to me, 'and a guinea if their world-famous artist thinks your joke worth illustrating, you should make a fortune, George.' So I determined to watch myself carefully and to jot down every wisecrack as it appeared. From that moment to this I have been the jestless misanthrope you see before you."



"HALLO, OLD MAN, I THOUGHT YOU WERE ON A DIET."
"AH, I HAD MY DIET AT HOME BEFORE I CAME."

At the Pictures

High Spirits and Low

A light-hearted cinema entertainment that I can cheerfully recommend is *Cain and Mabel*, in which Marion Davies is more charming than she has lately had opportunities of being, and Clark Gable returns with the swinging right, and certain of the wisecracks sizzle with causticity. It contains also two attractive performers—one a Jewish theatrical manager called *Jake Sherman*, and one an incorrigibly irresponsible publicity agent called *Reilly*, whose real names I do not know, partly because programmes are gradually disappearing altogether and partly because in this particular film the cast was not displayed on the screen. The omission is notable, because before the appearance of Clark Gable, pugilist, we have a glimpse of another performer, an actor so like, even with a dimple or two, that he might possibly be he. Happily, however, it is not; happily the tall broad-shouldered figure with lithe long strides and the authentic dimples soon afterwards appears and the absence of programme and cast-screen is forgiven. Clark Gable, as *Larry Cain*, is with us.

Cain and Mabel follows the usual lines, but it is lively and laughsome and one comes away well content; and also, for those who fancy such things, there is a stage musical-comedy too lavish ever to have been performed on a stage, and a prize-fight for heavy-weights where blows proper to an abattoir are exchanged without fatal effect, and in which *Cain*, the winner, loses, for a reason that I will not be so unsporting as to divulge. But to my childish mind, better to see than either the sumptuous show or the frantic ring is the slap that, in the night-restaurant, *Mabel* gives *Larry Cain*, and the ice-pail that *Cain*, retaliating, empties over *Mabel's* blonde locks. Intellectual stuff, you observe. After such a hostile beginning, need I say—but I won't. The film must be visited in person.



THE LEADING-LADY REVOLTS

Reilly . . . . . Roscoe Karns
Mabel O'Dare . . . . Marion Davies
Jake Sherman . . . . Walter Catlett



AN EYE-OPENER

Dr. Gribble . . . . . Bryan Powley
Gerald Lovell . . . . Basil Rathbone

Love from a Stranger is as English as *Cain and Mabel* is American, and the two make an excellent contrast. When at last this tragedy settles down to work, there is dramatic intensity; but far too much time has already been spent in inessentials and very slow acting. In fact only with difficulty is it made to fill out the regular space, while the end is so swift and crowded with incident that in the last seconds a double-locked door, the key of which is still in the dead man's pocket, is impossibly opened to let the rescuers in. "No one will notice a little thing like that," I seem to hear the director saying.

The main fault of this film, which began as a short story by Agatha Christie and was then adapted into a London stage success by Frank Vosper (you see, there was a programme at the London Pavilion, where *Love from a Stranger* is showing), is that we are in the dark about the principal figure, *Gerald Lovell*, played by Basil Rathbone. We expect him to be, and even want him to be, one of those familiar fortune-hunters beginning to snarl almost directly after he has secured his dupe; yet, in the film, he goes on and on, nothing but an adored and adoring husband, apparently paying for hotel suites with his own money. We do not even know if the brain and heart attacks to which we learn from his loving wife he is subject, are real or assumed.

These ought, of course, to be assumed, in order to make his future actions the less suspicious; but we never know for certain. All we do know is that Scotland Yard, having pursued inquiries at the prompting of the suitor whom *Lovell* had supplanted, could find nothing—although all the time *Lovell* was really *Fletcher*, the famous homicide, who, in precisely the same way, had already murdered three wives (apparently packing their remains into tin boxes in a cellar, on the ground floor), and appropriated their fortunes, but so far had escaped detection; and this in spite of the fact that there was a book about him, which thousands had read, containing a disguised photograph so like, beneath the false beard, that even the least intelligent among the audience at the London Pavilion, who might easily be myself, can recognise the original.

And still, although with my own eyes I have seen Basil Rathbone at his sinister task of preparing to do in his fourth wife, I am unable to say whether he was ill or pretending to be ill, mad or pretending to be mad.

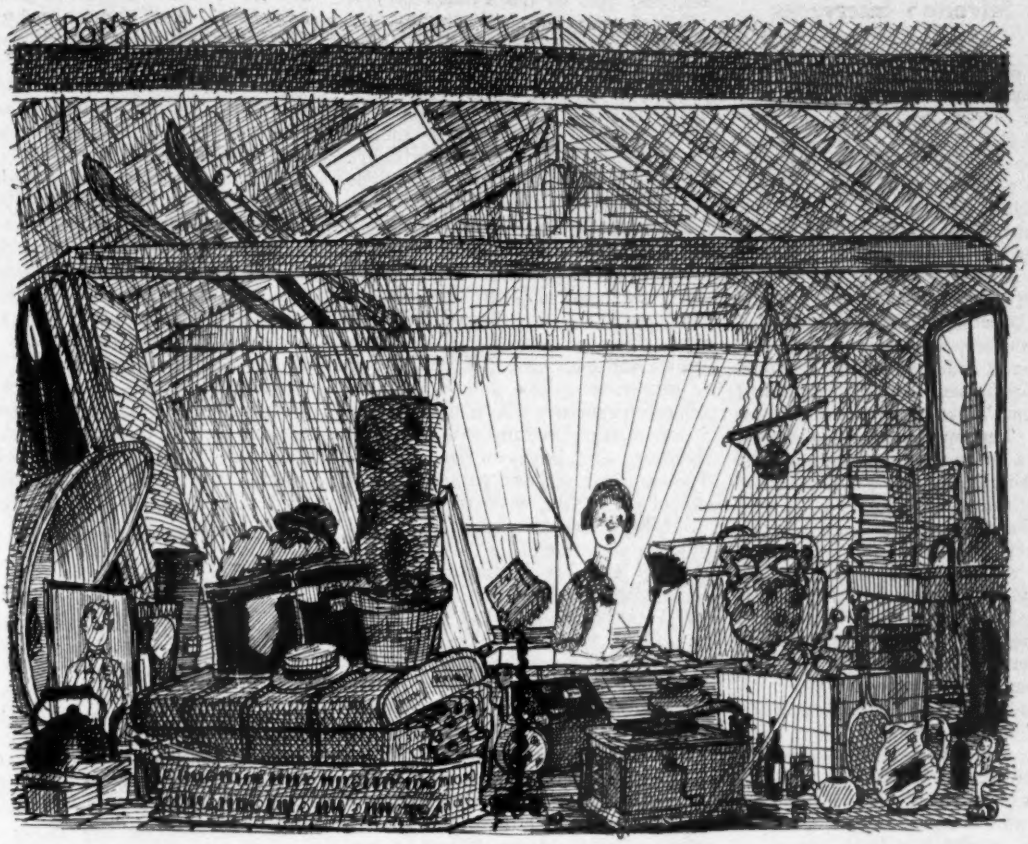
The last ten minutes are, however, sufficiently exciting to compensate for much that has gone before; and for their quality we have largely to thank Ann Harding, imported into this British cast from America. Her acting, under difficult conditions, seemed to me very good, especially in the closing passages, but she ought to suppress a tendency to sound like Mae West.

E. V. L.



SWEETS OF LOTTERY-LUCK

Aunt Lou . . . . . Jean Cadell
Carol Howard . . . . . Ann Harding



THE BRITISH CHARACTER

LOVE OF NEVER THROWING ANYTHING AWAY

Phrase-Book for the 25th

(*Note.*—Although this phrase-book will be found useful by Sassenachs who unwittingly stray into BURNS suppers, it is primarily intended for those Scots exiled from their native land whose memories, as it were, need a refresher course so that they may meet Brither Scots man to man the world ower and—er—be able to talk to each other in the auld tongue.)

The last time I suppit Cockie leekie was at { Ecclefechan / Auchtermuchty / Kirkcudbright }

at { Ne'er day in 1905. / Hogmanay in 1927. / the muckin o' Georgie's byre in 1931. }

The Chairman' s awfu { dreich. / fu. / glaikit. }

Waiter, see's a wheen mair saut herring.

Gin the piper skirls the haggis'll come in, warrrm, r-r-reeking, r-r-rich.

{ Jock / Tam / Chairley } ye are { blethering / haivering } the haggis is no { teuch. / deed. / cauld. }

{ These sybos / This kail / Ma tawties } are / is { unco halesome. / grand fare. / ower het. }

Wha is't wha is proposing the Immortal Memory?

It is { MacTullibardine of Nether Auchentairne. / the auld callant wi' the muckle whuskers. / ma guid-sister's third kizzen. }

I canna thole a claivering chiel. Leeze me on guid gear in sma' buik.

Dinna be { feart / blate } to pass the { whusky. / usquebae. / cratur. }

Man { it's a sair fecht. / I'm tapsalteerie. / I'm fair forjeskit. }

Weel, we hae din weel the nicht. Just anither deoch—anither deoch an doris for auld lang syne.

Mr. Silvertop Intervenes

"It's only natural that a man 'oo sees spikic phenomolla the way I do," said Mr. Silvertop, "should get very 'ardened to it. You can't reelly 'elp it when three nights out of four you goes to sleep with your great-grandfather doing a short-arm balance on the bed-rail. But last month I come on a case what was proper rum, to say the least of it.

"I 'ad a call from a gent in the country 'oo said I'd been recommended to 'im as pretty 'ot on wireless. When I got there I found it was one of them old manor-'ouses, so old and crooked you almost 'ad to change gear to cross the 'all. The gent—a nice old geyser, looking a bit pale—took me straight up to the library, an 'ell of a great room with enough oak beams to float St. Paul's and one of them mistral-galleries at the end.

"'We've lived 'ere for the last twenty years,' 'e ses, 'but this is our first wireless. We've only 'ad it two days. Will you test it?' I twiddled a bit. 'Perfect,' I ses, 'clear as a bell and a wonderful range of stations.' 'E takes me by the arm. 'That's just the trouble,' 'e ses, 'we're getting more than we bargained for. Someone's 'aving us on.'

"'Ow?' I asks.

"'At nine the first night,' 'e ses, 'I turned it on for the News, which is reelly what I bought it for. No sooner 'ad the Pronouncer got going than all of a sudden 'e faded clean out and a couple of voices come on instead, 'aving an 'ell of an argument. We thought we'd got another station till we found it didn't matter 'ow much we twiddled—unless we akcherly switched off. When the clock struck ten they was still at it 'ammer-and-tongs, but as the last chime sounded back came the National and out they faded. And last night exactly the same thing 'appened.'

"'What's the argy-bargy about?' I asks 'im. 'It was 'igh-faluting sort of stuff,' 'e ses, 'but the long and short of it was that one chap 'ad butted in on the other's pitch.' 'Oho!' I ses, for I 'ad a sudden flash. 'Can I 'ave the library to myself to-night from eight or so?' 'I'll see to it,' 'e ses.

"Well, about eight I locks myself in the library and sits down with a pipe. Nothing 'appened till nearly 'arf-past and then all of a sudden a tall 'andsome old spook snoops through the panelling and takes up a stand by the fire. In fancy-dress, 'e was, with an 'am-frill round 'is neck and a proper 'aughty look on 'is dial. 'E took no notice of me. A minute before nine I switches on, and just as the Pronouncer ses 'This is the National programme,' what I was expecting 'appened—another spook blew in, the bloke by the fire lets out an 'owl of rage and their voices take over. I switched off at that, for being as spikic as what I am I could 'ear 'em perfectly without.

"The second spook was a shy little cuss togged up quieter and looking a bit apologetic-like. 'Knave!' 'ollers Number One, ''ow often 'ave I forbidden your intrusion?' 'Many times, Sire,' ses Number Two, 'but, alas! I come not of my own choice.' 'Caitiff!' roars Number One, 'I'd 'ave you drawn and quartered if I could'—and 'e goes on to make a number of 'ighly offensive remarks. Well, I could see it was a situation what called for firm 'andling. So I bangs on the table and I cries, ''Ere, you two perishers, come off of it. You with the 'am-frill, 'aven't you never learned manners? What's your name?'

"'Sir Geoffrey 'Ollington,' ses 'e, looking at me a bit rattled. 'Knighted by Gloriana 'erself, fairest vestal——'

"'Cut it out,' I ses. 'I never 'eard of the lady, even if she was one. Why are you 'ere?' 'I was stabbed by my foul uncle as I leaned from yonder casement,' 'e ses. 'What year?' I asks. 'Fifteen-eighty-three,' 'e answers. 'Right,' I ses. 'And what about you?' 'I'm 'Umphrey Roundle,' ses Number Two, 'manservant to Lord Stringfellow. One night the old beggar slew me up 'ere in 'is cups with a warming-pan. Seventeen-seventeen it was, and ever since then my nightly appearance 'as overlapped with Sir Geoffrey's for an hour and it drives 'im to a fury.'

"'Corlumme!' I ses. ''E's 'ad over two 'undred years to get used to the idea. You don't tell me you've 'ad all this every night since seventeen-seventeen?' 'Every ruddy night,' 'e answers. 'Look 'ere, you narsty old snob,' I ses to Sir Geoffrey, ''as it never occurred to you what a jolly time you two could 'ave if you chummed up?' ''Ow the 'ell can you see us?' 'e growls. 'Nobody 'as before.' 'It's on account of me being so spikic,' I ses, 'but you'd 'ardly understand what that means. What matters more is that you two some'ow 'ave the right wave-length and so everything you ses can be over'eard by everybody in the 'ouse through this 'ere new machine. You don't want all the maids a-laughing at you, do you?'

"I knew that would get 'ome with Sir Geoffrey. 'E started chewing 'is whiskers. 'You know, what's wrong with you two is you're bored,' I ses. 'What you wants is something what'll take your minds off things quietly. I 'ave it!' I ses. 'Either of you ever play chess?' Talk about a lucky shot! 'Chess!' cries Sir Geoffrey, all excited, 'I was the Court champion!' 'Why, I used to beat Father Dominic!' cries the other. Just like a couple of schoolgirls, they was. 'All right, boys,' I ses, 'leave it to me.'

"And chess it is. Every night the butler puts out the board at five to nine, with a screen round it, for it's a bit 'arrowing for the ladies to see the bishops 'opping about on their own. And the News comes through lovely, apart from one of 'em saying 'Check!' every now and then. As it 'appens," said Mr. Silvertop, "that's proved a very 'appy reminder, for the gent sent me a good fat one this morning for my trouble. 'E ses in 'is letter Sir Geoffrey's winning—but I wouldn't mind betting 'arf-a-dollar the old devil cheats!"

ERIC.

The Play

"I HAVE been looking over the programme for our Boy Scout concert," I said to Colonel Hogg, "and I don't see my name at all. As Assistant-Scoutmaster I should surely be allowed to make a speech or something. The thing is ridiculous as it stands. 'Singing, led by Colonel Hogg; Monologue by Colonel Hogg; Display of Bridge-Building by the Troop under the superintendence of Colonel Hogg,' and so on right to the end, until we finish up with 'Review of the Year's Work by Colonel Hogg.'"

The Colonel eyed me reproachfully. "You appear in the playlet in Part II.," he said. "You have overlooked that, Conkleshill. Just glance at it again."

I glanced at it again and read—

THE BLACK BARN MYSTERY

An Original Playlet by
Colonel Hogg.

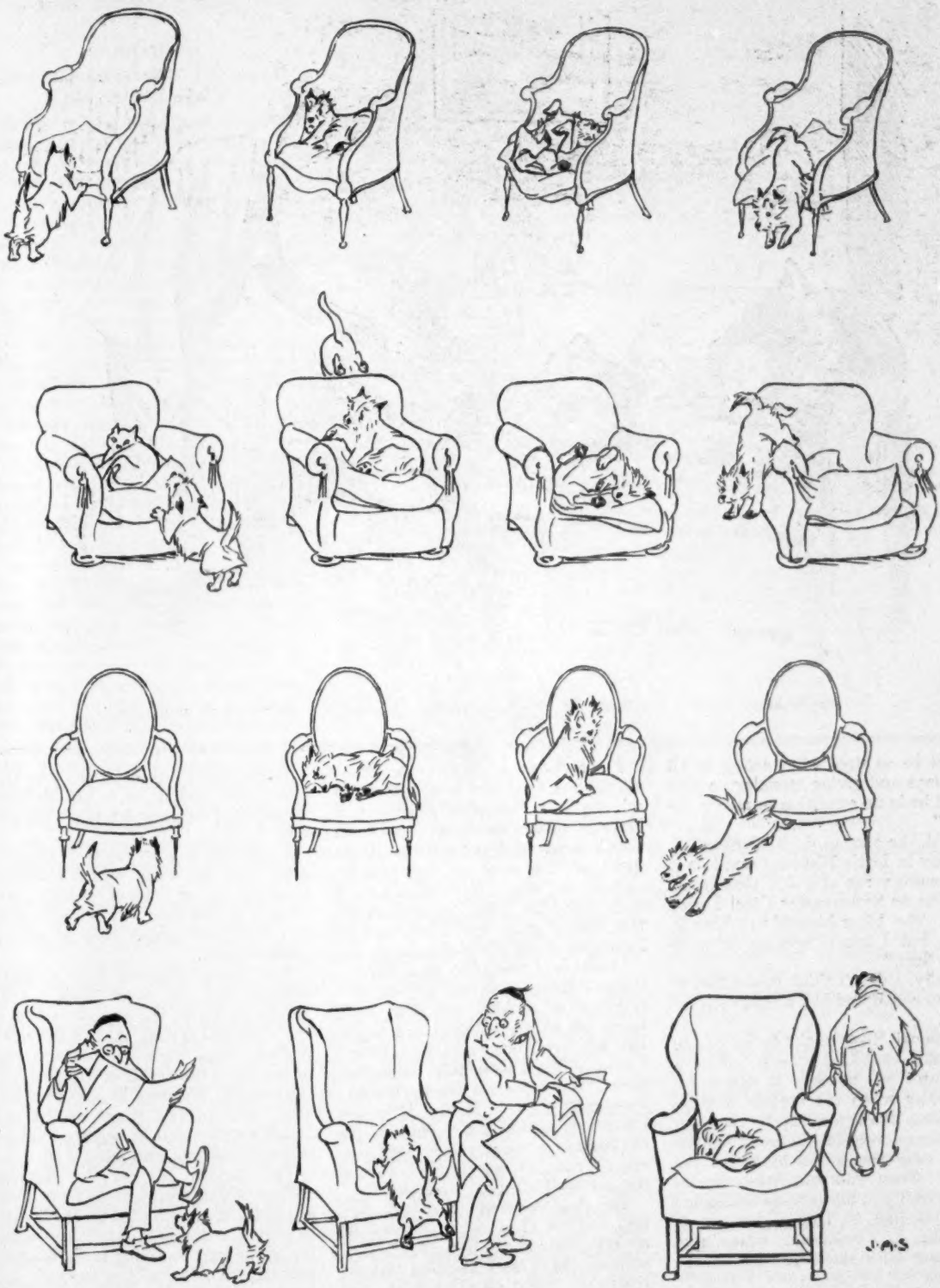
Cast:

Policeman.....Colonel Hogg
Bandit....Patrol-Leader Jorkins
Damsel.....Scout Arben
A Gang.....Members of Troop
A Battered Corpse..L. Conkleshill.

"It doesn't sound much of a part," I said grudgingly.

"I gave it to you," said the Colonel, "because I know that you're the only real actor we've got, and it takes art to look like a lifelike corpse. You'll bring the house down, Conkleshill, old boy—you'll bring the house down."

"But I still don't see why I can't make the speech at the end," I said. "Reviewing the progress of the Troop.



THE MASTER OF THE HOUSE; or, OUR DOMESTIC PET GETS COMFORTABLE



Nervous Bachelor. "I—IT'S ALL RIGHT, OLD FRUIT—Y-YOU KNOW ME—I'M YOUR UNCLE BY MARRIAGE."

You'll be so tired after acting in all the plays and giving monologues that you'll be in no condition to review the year."

"I'd like you to do it, Conkleshill. Nobody in Little Wobbley could do it with more verve and skill than yourself, but as Scoutmaster I feel I *must* do it. The Vicar himself was keen to do it, but I felt it was my duty to stand firm."

Really, I didn't think it was fair, so I called round and had a chat with the Vicar.

"Colonel Hogg ought to let one of us make the final speech," I said. "Couldn't we manage it somehow? Supposing when the curtain falls on *The Black Barn* you leap to your feet and move a vote of thanks to Colonel Hogg, and then go on to review the year? Then you can finish up by saying that you are sure the assembled mob will like to hear a few words from Mr. L. Conkleshill, whose able assistance with the Troop has meant so much."

A gleam came into the Vicar's eye.

"I'll do it," he said.

Preparations for the concert went ahead fast, and we had about ten rehearsals of *The Black Barn*. As I had anticipated mine was a very small part indeed. All I had to do was to lie down on the floor and be dragged across the stage by Patrol-Leader Jorkins and the Gang. Apart from the fact that it gave me little scope for histrionic ability it was uncomfortable.

However, every time we rehearsed Colonel Hogg exercised an author's privilege of altering the play, until there was hardly anything except the title left. From being a battered corpse I became first a mysterious Chinaman, then a Witch, then a Bolshevist, and eventually an Old Man. Then the Colonel decided that two old men for the bandits to capture was better than one old man, so the Vicar was offered the part and accepted with glee.

The final rehearsal went off very well, and the Vicar and I both showed up splendidly in the last scene where, with the aid of the Policeman (Colonel Hogg), we killed all the bandits and freed the hero and the damsel.

"It's not so bad," said the Colonel with an author's quiet pride, "but I'm afraid the ending is a bit obvious. However, I suppose we must leave it now."

I had told a few friends of the surprise that the Vicar and I intended to spring on the Colonel by taking the Review of the Year out of his mouth, and they all agreed that it was a splendid idea.

The whole evening was a great success, and *The Black Barn* a riot, largely owing to the superb acting of the Vicar and myself. At last the great moment came when we were to creep in and untie the bonds of the hero and the damsel. We crept in, and from the other side of the stage rushed the bandits, who seized us roughly and tied us hand and foot and gagged us.

The curtain fell on the surprise ending (which surprised us more than anybody), and we waited for the Scouts to untie us. But they didn't, and as we lay on the stage listening to the Colonel standing in front of the curtains delivering his Review of the Year, I wished that I had not whispered our plans to a few selected friends.

Less Fellow Chaps

JOURNALISTS

(With apologies to H. V. Morton of "The Daily Herald.")

George is fifty-three, and he gets a shilling an hour and no overtime. All day long he works among the rattle of typewriters, the ringing of bells, the screams of sub-editors and the long-distance whispers of Special Correspondents. Sometimes a measured mellow booming echoes throughout the great building, and he knows that the Editor is dictating the Leading Article. Until twelve noon of each day the whole edifice throbs and shakes with the pounding thrum of the great presses. In the centre of this George does his fifteen hours.

His long white beard is full of old clippings, filings and headings. Half of it has been wrenched off by the presses' relentless cogs. Two years ago no one could find Reuter's special report from Turkey, but George found it—hidden in his beard.

Sometimes a little wizened fat man is carried in in a coroneted sedan-chair borne by liveried flunkeys, and he knows that the owner of *The Daily Dope*, Lord Livermore, has come to dictate to-morrow's leading article.

It is an interesting job (apart from the pay). He feels that he is near to Life: that Big Things move round him.

"See that fellow?" he asks as a man with the face of CASSIUS and the hair of an industrialised poet dodges furtively out of a nearby cubicle. "That's Merry-Thought, who writes 'Krazy Kuttings.' He gets them out of the American comics," he whispers.

* * *

George's job is monotonous at times. He has to hunt through all the other daily papers to see if they have printed anything which *The Daily Dope* has missed. Then, if they have, he must cut it out and take it to the third sub-editor, who cuts it and passes it on to the second, who cuts it and passes it on to the first. The first sub-editor cuts it and passes what's left of it on to the assistant editor, who sees that it agrees with the paper's policy before passing it on to the editor, who may or may not use it in to-morrow's issue if he has room. And of course there are precautions to be taken against infringement of copyright and things like that, which are outside a layman's understanding. Responsible work, you will say; and George realises that too.

* * *

In the last twelve years it is interesting to note that a round dozen of George's predecessors have gone mad. They were, he says, removed by specially-trained commissionaires and sent down to Lord Livermore's garden hostel for distracted journalists.

Who keeps their wives and little ones? The answer is simple. None have wives and very few have little ones. It is a part of Lord Livermore's policy.

* * *

George started as an office-boy, one of a hatching in 1896. In those days the whole paper was printed by hand, and the editor would arrive on horseback at noon, often escorted down Fleet Street by Mr. BALFOUR or the Marquess of SALISBURY. An editor was *grand seigneur*—no puppet-vassal then. Now George is assistant sub-editor once removed. One day he hopes to be editor—if he lives long enough and shows enough ability. . . .

"The editor's job's all right," says George, "and you don't really have to *think*—old Livermore does that for you. And of course I'll be away from all the bells and typewriters and all that *then*. But I shall miss the company—I shall indeed," he muses sadly, "shut up alone in my office."

Somehow one feels that old George need not worry about missing the company. He has already missed something far more important—the bus.



"THANK YOU, GENTLEMEN, THAT WILL BE ENOUGH FOR TO-DAY."

Things That Might Have Been More Handsomely Expressed.

"It has usually been the custom to get some prominent gentleman to take the chair, but on this occasion the selection fell on Councillor Eastland."—*Provincial Weekly.*

"The brigade was at work only for about half-an-hour, but during that time damage estimated at several hundreds of pounds was caused."—*Local Paper.*

Not bad, boys, not bad.



"HULLO! WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN FALLING?"
"GUESS."

Trottlers in Vienna

[Poor citizens of Vienna are reported to have paid about £80,000 in lawyers' fees and fines in 1936 for the satisfaction of calling their neighbours "Trottel!"—*The Times.*]

IN Vienna, as I read,
When the language grows abusive
And the adversaries need
Something final and conclusive,
So enfolding and so strong
That the cheeks grow pale (or mottle)
They will cry—unless I'm wrong
In the accent—"You're a trottel."

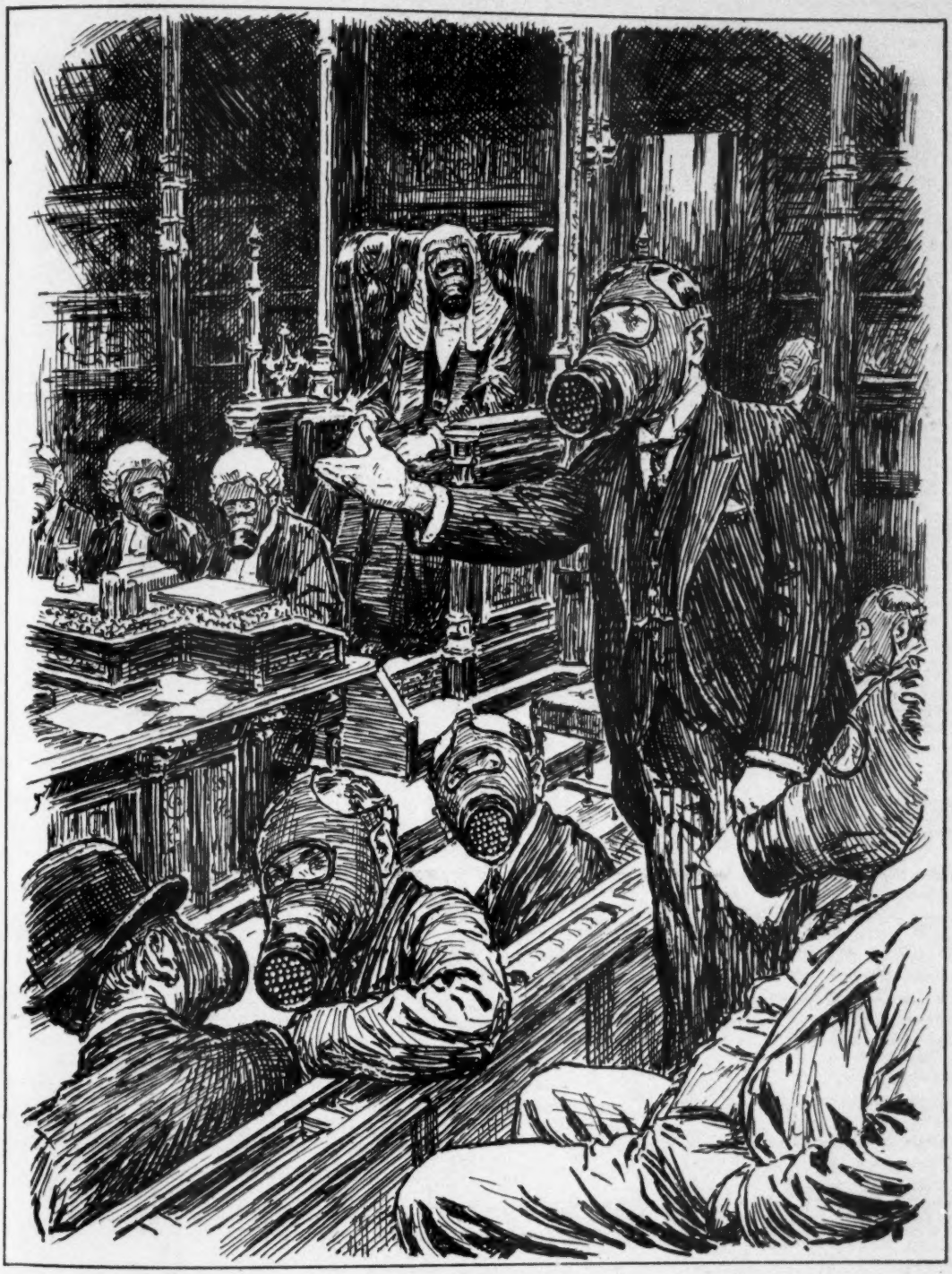
What there is about that term
That could stab the thickest rhino
And cause elephants to squirm,
I for one am blest if I know;
As to that, research is vain;
If you put it to them nicely
They'd be troubled to explain
Where the triumph lies precisely.

And the iron Law has dropped,
With a fine, on each offender;
Many thousands have been copped,
I believe of either gender;
But they cannot be coerced;
They decline to give that phrase up,
And whoever gets in first
Glows contentedly, and pays up.

And the charm no doubt is great,
And the wily Viennes-er
Finds it worth a dozen straight
On his adversary's beezer.
Yet in this brave land of ours
We should find in half-a-minute
That for all its vaunted powers
There's a lack of substance in it.

Where the Briton's slow to bottle
Up his fire, as in the Army,
If you called a man a trottel
He would merely think you barmy;
But, to see his cheek grow whiter
(If of florid habit, pinker)
You can get at him with Blighter
Or, for graver issues, stinker.

DUM-DUM.



GAS DRILL DAY AT WESTMINSTER

(An Awful Vision of the Future)

"AND I THINK I MAY CONFIDENTLY SAY, JUDGING FROM THE EXPRESSION ON THE FACES OF HONOURABLE MEMBERS, THAT THE HOUSE IS IN UNANIMOUS AGREEMENT WITH THE VIEWS I HAVE EXPRESSED."



Plumber. "MIGHT WE 'AVE THE PORTABLE, LADY? ME AND ME MATE WORKS BETTER TO MUSIC."

The Easy Way

TAKING it by and large, my aunt's sherry-party extended about three weeks on either side of the actual date for which the invitations were issued.

But let me explain.

(Note advantage of the written word over the spoken one. When people *say* "Let me explain," what is the customary rejoinder?

"Oh, I know that already."

"You told me last week, and also on Monday morning, and again the night before last."

"No, no, don't bother. I understand absolutely. What you mean is . . ." and so on.)

Very well. My aunt had been told, and had said herself more than one hundred times that it was such an *easy* way of entertaining one's friends.

"Not like a dinner-party," said my aunt.

"Not even like a tea-party," said poor Miss Tide-Trumbull (Aunt's friend).

"Not like a garden-party," said I, looking out at two dripping laurel-bushes and a dear little flower-bed that I *knew* lay concealed somewhere between them.

"Not even so very like a sherry-party. More like a game of Sardines," said Laura, gazing thoughtfully round the sitting-room.

My aunt said again that a sherry-party was a very easy way of entertaining one's friends, and could Miss Tide-Trumbull remember whether the address-book was in the left-hand top-drawer of the writing-table by the window, or *under* the leg of the little red cabinet on the landing that never would stand straight?

Eventually Laura found it inside "The Bells of Aberdovey" on the top of the piano—where she was as a matter of fact looking for my aunt's fountain-pen—and we all got to work. (The fountain-pen turned up in the pocket of aunt's green cardigan that had been put with the things for the jumble-sale. My aunt at once took the green cardigan out of the jumble-sale and put it back in her wardrobe. We all realised that this was the reasonable and logical result of the recovery of the fountain-pen.

Fourteen lists, at a rough estimate, were made of aunt's friends and neighbours. Each time that someone said: "Oh, but we've forgotten the dear Admiral!" or, "What about those miserable people at 'The Haven'?" my aunt immediately tore up all existing lists and began a new one.

But by the end of the week we had got as far as crossing out the word "Tennis" in the left-hand bottom corner of the invitation-cards and writing "Sherry" above it. Laura, still under the influence of Christmas-cards, put a penny stamp on each envelope and said that this made it all easier than ever. Actually, however, it didn't. Aunt said that even if the rest of the world *had* gone mad and cared for nothing but jazz and the cinema-house every week, one had been brought up a lady and would remain so. And as there were no halfpenny stamps in the house, would I please walk up to the post-office and get some?

We entered upon the next phase with the arrival—or, alternatively,



"WE ARE SORRY, BUT A ROYAL PRINCESS MAY NOT MARRY THE SON OF A SWINEHERD. HOWEVER, AS A TOKEN OF OUR APPRECIATION OF YOUR BRAVERY WE CONFER ON YOU THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE PIG MARKETING BOARD."

the non-arrival—of replies. More lists were immediately made.

It was at this stage that poor Miss Tide-Trumbull—who had worked like a black over the crossing-out of "Tennis"—made a grave error.

She actually suggested that if a list of acceptances were made there would be no need to make a list of refusals. Aunt to this simply said that if we weren't going to be *thorough* we might just as well give the whole thing up.

We went on being thorough.

Some of the most thorough moments were those concentrated into the correspondence with Cousin William in the City, who was appealed to for advice about the sherry.

The last postcard of all said that he was just going abroad and wasn't having any letters forwarded.

Aunt said it seemed very odd that a man of business should suddenly dart off like that, and no wonder that stocks and shares were what they were.

Then we plunged back, metaphorically, into sherry.

One will pass lightly over the purchase of extra sherry-glasses, the breaking of two of them by Laura in attempting a conjuring-trick, and aunt's repeated assurances that it didn't matter in the *least*, troubles never came singly, and she couldn't help remembering how poor Aunt Blanche had once got some broken glass into her foot and nearly died of blood-poisoning.

Nor is there any need to dwell upon the difficulty that we—and the Stores—experienced in connection with a choice of biscuits, olives and small savouries. They were negligible compared with what we went through with the cigarettes. And hardly had we recovered from the cigarettes than Laura raised the question of ash-trays.

"There is one in the library," said my aunt. "The one that dear Cousin Ernest always liked."

Miss Tide-Trumbull, to my mind, absolutely retrieved her lost footing by saying at once that Cousin Ernest's ash-tray ought not to be risked *at all*, and that we'd better buy something cheap and indestructible for the party.

In the end about two dozen little Japanese enamel affairs were placed about the drawing-room on all the pieces of furniture that hadn't been moved up to aunt's bedroom (for safety), into the dining-room (to save the servants trouble), or behind the screen in the hall (to get them out of the way).

By four o'clock everything had been ready for over an hour and Laura said that as no one was expected until six she supposed there'd be time for her to smoke a cigarette.

A shattering cry from my aunt interrupted her enjoyment of it.

"Laura! What are you thinking of? *You're dropping ash into one of the ash-trays!*"

We were able to get the ash-tray emptied and replaced long before the first guest arrived—but the breach between aunt and Laura lasted for days.

The party itself of course was just like other sherry-parties.

I heard several people saying what a delightful form of entertainment it was. I also heard my Aunt Laura, Miss Tide-Trumbull and myself replying pleasantly and readily that it was such a nice easy way of entertaining.

E. M. D.

The Moran-Gleeson Line

IN Ballykealy the outstanding event of the month was the painting of a white line down the centre of the long main street, a process that attracted so many onlookers that

someone said of them, "the walls was actchilly bulgin' with people."

After a good deal of arguing the job was entrusted, not to those men who were known to be handiest with a paint-brush, but to the two candidates who, it was judged, could remain longest on their knees or in a stooping position. Several men were rejected by this standard—one at least because he suffered from rheumatism when, as he explained, a Rathberry wind blew, Rathberry lying south of his own town; another because he was much too fat to bend very far. "Michael would have got it right enough," a friend said, "only for him bein' altogether too well upholsthered. Didn't I see him in the hospital that time an' he was like a marquee in the bed?"

Upon Jamesy Moran and Pat Gleeson the choice fell at last, and, supplied with equal portions of the very expensive and apparently irreplaceable white paint, the two men set to work, beginning at opposite ends of the town. The final joining was to take place, they were told, at the red mark in front of the Barracks, a building long recognised as the halfway house of the long street.

It was inevitable that from the beginning both draughtsmen should have their own ardent supporters who gathered in what Jamesy called "a class of a ravenous queue," by which criticism he referred only to their unbridled enthusiasm. "They had a great proddygality of notions seemin'ly," Gleeson told his family of his followers, "but annyway they had a barbarous amount of ould chat; you'd think they were masther painters to hear them, an' me knowin' well that the most of them couldn't decipher as much as a full-stop."

The fact that odds were being laid on them by the onlookers did not hurry them in the least, and with maddening deliberateness they made their measurements from kerb to kerb. "If they was to go so far as to installate one of them teetotalisators I wouldn't thravel one bit quicker," Moran said, and his colleague agreed. Slowly the work went on, and rival supporters hurried from group to group reporting progress. "He's fornenst Foley's now," someone said of Jamesy; "but the Lupin is all element to-day an' she's for ever breakin' up th' operations," this animal being the temperamental goat once hailed as a Nubian by an expert stranger and known as a Lupin ever since. "I wouldn't put a bad sixpence on him this minute," someone else reported of Gleeson, "for to judge by the look of him his sthretch of the line is apt to have a lingersome end."



"Oh! play the game, Sir—play the game."

With only a few more yards to go there was a notable change in the demeanour of the painters, a slight uneasiness that was welcomed by the almost frantic spectators as a sign of haste, and the two civic guards whose job it was to act as buffers between the approaching groups stood back to back and soon became infected by the common frenzy, without losing their determination to keep the rival supporters apart. "If so be they meet they'll pound one another into pulps," they told each other, "for they're greatly elevated this minute." All the time the necessary measurements were being made, and the two lines grew nearer, and simultaneously the watching constables burst into loud speech. "Think of your mother's people, let you!" the Clare man yelled at the exhausted Jamesy Moran in the encouraging phrase of his home county. At his back the constable from Donegal reasoned with the equally jaded Pat Gleeson. "Very little more courage will axle you up for the finish now," he shouted.

The heels of the kneeling painters had almost met when, to the incredulous horror of the crowd, the two obviously harassed men rose jerkily to their feet and, abandoning their cans but still carrying the brushes, they fled across the street and took refuge in Tracy's shop. In stricken silence the guards stepped off the footpath and picked up the tins; then, turning towards the horrified watchers, they turned those tins upside-down.

The paint had given out. D. M. L.

At the Play

"THE LILY MAID" (WINTER GARDEN)

The Lily Maid at the Winter Garden is called by its author, Mr. RUTLAND BOUGHTON, poem and music. The word "poem" is a wide one, but it warns us, or should, that the action will be a subordinate interest. It is a needful warning, because the world of King Arthur and his knights, in which Mr. BOUGHTON has for so long found inspiration, is essentially a world of deeds.

From the moment when the curtain goes up on the fine castle of *Sir Bernard*, the father of *Elaine*, we feel ourselves very near to people who have been familiar figures since childhood: the knights of whom the twelfth century first loved to tell, and who have been remembered ever since. The castle is very real, with *Hod*, a garrulous serving-man (Mr. FREDERICK WOODHOUSE), so convincing that he makes it plain what an intolerable bore the family which lived with him year in and year out must have found him and what forbearance they commanded. Small wonder that the arrival of any stranger at this castle, whose mistress had long since abandoned it, was always a pleasure to the inmates!

When *Lancelot* (Mr. ARTHUR FEAR) arrives incognito it is to talk of tomorrow's joust at Winchester, and we, the audience, share the excitement of his other listeners. We are tantalised that we have got as near to Camelot as *Sir Bernard's* hall and can get no further. It was quite different with *The Immortal Hour*. What we saw on the stage was as much the heart of that Celtic fairyland as anywhere else. We had then no sense of being just out of sight and earshot of a gay and bustling civilisation. But in *The Lily Maid* the very success of the setting and its greater familiarity make it harder for us to be content to meet a mighty man of action like *Lancelot* and only to be with him during a slight and sad episode, however deeply symbolical and universal in its meaning.

Lancelot cannot love *Elaine* because he is tied by his past. It recalls him. Both its good and its evil have hooks of steel grappled to his soul. The call is insistent and he obeys it, and *Elaine* (Miss SYBIL EVERS), being extruded from her brief paradise and being cursed by her father, who represents her unhappy origins, she despairs. Miss EVERS brings out all the poignancy of the tragedy because she is naturally made for lighter and more joyous parts. She does not look, and ought not to be, a predestined victim. Mr. ARTHUR FEAR shows us a *Lancelot* giving no outward sign of the sort of man he really is in his heart. He suggests a simplicity and a straightforward strength, and his self-control in taking the most painful decisions does not falter. Both *Lancelot* and *Elaine* are finished parts. Mr. FEAR and Miss EVERS mount easily, step by step, to the climax of their separation. Their singing brought them warm applause as they successfully passed through each scene, having methodically advanced the development of the poem. But they, and still more *Sir Lavaine* (Mr. JOHN FULLARD) and *Sir Bernard* (Mr. BRUCE CLARK), are characters in a situation—people who may be expected to take decisive action at any moment.



SAYING IT WITH MUSIC

Elaine . . . . . MISS SYBIL EVERS
Sir Lancelot . . . . . MR. ARTHUR FEAR



NO KNIGHTLY STARVATION

Hod . . MR. FREDERICK WOODHOUSE

The operatic form requires that at moments of greatest tension people shall stand listening quietly while other people sing very slowly and deliberately, unfolding their intentions at the pace that pleases them. The compensation for this dramatic strain comes when the music and the words sung lift the whole scene to a higher level; and in *The Lily Maid* the beautiful clearness with which all the performers sing sometimes throws too strong a light on the fabric of the words sung and shows them very often as words of very ordinary and pedestrian texture. But at each side of the stage a gaily-attired mediæval chorus is grouped, and so grouped as to look like wings attached to the body of the production to enable it to leave the ground. The chorus explains the inwardness and the elevation of what is taking place, and does so calmly, accepting tragedy without grief. Mr. STEUART WILSON, who conducts the orchestra, helps the chorus to this complete mastery of their themes.

The main theme is the blackest pessimism, but it is so handled that it does not oppress; and if there are no melodies that seem to come from afar, like "How Beautiful the Lordly Ones" in *The Immortal Hour*, there is no failure of the music to charge each successive part of the poem with its full meaning. D. W.

At the Revue

"FOLIES D'AMOUR" (LONDON CASINO)

THE art of eating in semi-darkness is one which must frequently be mastered by the coal-miner and the Arctic explorer; but, while giving them all credit for a certain rude dexterity, it must be remembered that to neither of these persons are the penalties severe if he should happen to splash his neighbour. In a fashionable restaurant, however, things are very different, there is a narrower and less elastic code; and, taken by and large, you would be happier to deny yourself dinner altogether than to go to one of these places and commit the irreparable error of lofting a mushroom to land pin-high by the second stud of the man at the next table.

Or so I reminded myself as I divided my attentions equally between the claims of an excellent cabaret and an excellent dinner. The notion of seeing something worth seeing at the moment of eating something worth eating has a rich and fascinating appeal about it, but obviously the stage lays claim to all the light that is going; and although at the London Casino the producers generously lent us eaters an occasional glimmer, there was more than one crisis during my dinner in which I could have wished the table-cloth black or my chicken served with a luminous sauce.

Once again this cabaret is remarkable for the ingenuity and brilliance of its scenic effects. These are ambitious but never pretentious, and in the freshness of their arrangement and subtlety of their colouring they mark the work of two considerable artists in the theatre—M. JEAN LE SEYEUX, who has staged the whole entertainment, and Mme. NATALIE KOMAROVA, who has been responsible for the choreography and grouping. They are both from the "Folies Bergère."

To my mind the most effective scene was that in which the movements of a number of dancers who were themselves invisible, being inside an immense replica of a gold jewel-box, were reflected to the audience on the inside of the box's lid, which was half-open and faced with squares of mirror. The impression of looking down into a well-lit aquarium was strengthened when the dancers formed into shapes suggestive of odd marine creatures of the leggy sort; and when finally a small revolving stage was thrown into gear the result was most exciting.



PARISIANS—



AND PYRAMIDS

Next to this, and more extensive, was a survey of the Metal Age, which gave M. LE SEYEUX great scope for a *surréaliste* parody of machinery and a clever use of metallic colourings in his settings, while a beautiful little mime, performed by the BALLET BODENWIESER, mimicked the rhythms of pistons and cranks and (would it be?) camshafts.

First of the special turns came the MENORCAS, for their breath-taking achievements as human Meccano. They grip each other in a pyramid of unwavering tenacity, and the same MENORCA is constantly the foundation of the tower. What a man! He is far from being a vulgar bulge of muscle, and where he stores the force to support six largish colleagues in the air I cannot guess. No crumb of Balearic back-chat escaped their monk-like silence.

Having been hauled up into a trapeze by her teeth, Miss ELLY ARDELTY then performed a number of amazing feats of balance, which included kneeling on the swinging bar without hand-holds and then picking a handkerchief with her lips from between her knees. She is extremely accomplished.

Miss CINDA GLENN has arms and wrists to which all points of the compass are equal, and puts this gift to the utmost use. In looks she is exactly halfway between Mlle. DELYSIA and Miss GRACIE FIELDS, and she has a pleasant voice.

The rest of the constellation is made up by a humorist named HERMAN HYDE, who plays a mandolin which turns into an unconventional but effective sporting-gun, a piccolo on which his lady-friend performs at the same time from its other end, and a double-bass which sadly heaves its vast shoulders and solemnly unrolls its curling nose in a pathetic gesture of despair; and our dear old, never-to-be-seen-too-often friends the BRYANTS, one of whom continues to expend boundless time and energy in vain attempts to prevent his fellow falling, with a peculiar corkscrew motion all his own, to the floor. To me they are amongst the very best things in current variety.

I need hardly add that the chorus rivals the Guards in accuracy, and has been picked with rare discrimination.

ERIC.

More Letters to the Secretary of a Golf Club

From Ezekiel Higgs, Links Road, Roughover.

9th Jan., '37.

DEAR SIR,—I see that the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews will have before them at their May Meeting a recommendation from their Rules of Golf Committee to limit, from 1938 on, the number of golf clubs carried by a player to *fourteen*. As I have never carried more than *five* clubs and am seriously considering reducing the number to *four*, will you please tell me what it is all about?

Yours faithfully,
E. HIGGS.

From Harry Cleek, Professional Roughover Golf Club.

9/1/37.

DEAR SIR,—If the fourteen club limitation goes through this may prevent me getting into the "Prize Money" in National Championships. In view of the fact that I carry fifteen clubs, please make representations to the R. and A. Golf Club on my behalf to have the number increased by one.

Yours faithfully,
H. CLEEK.

From Alfred Humpitt, Senior Caddie, Roughover Golf Club.

MR. WHELK, SIR,—Excuse a letter from yours truly and the signatures below, but Sir, it is to say from all of us that we is main glad about the New Rule and we hopes it will pass, for what with some of the present day golf-bags being more like a travelling portmantoe than anything else we caddies are becoming more like railway porters than anything else, and that's a fact.

And Sir, as proof of what we is saying—one day last summer Porker Snoop caddied a bag for a gent that had in it: 1 pair sox, 1 pair shoes, 1 waterproof trousers, 1 jersey, 1 coat, 1 cap, 1 toothbrush, 1 raiser, brush and soap, 1 pair pyjamas, 1 comb, 1 spare set of teeth, 1 corkscrew and 1 bottle of whisky, foreby eight balls and 23 clubs.

Well, Sir, if you could get the size of the golf-bag reduced and get a limit put on the contents we'd write you another letter of thanks and no mistake.

yours very sincerely
ALF HUMPITT
GEO HUMPITT
SILAS JERKS
HERBERT (PORKER) SNOOP
JAMES WADDOCK
ERNIE WILLS
HARRY CRONE
PETER HOGGBITE

From John Bystander, "The Copse," Roughover.

9/1/37.

DEAR MR. WHELK,—Thank goodness for the new rule, for if it is passed spectators at competitions will have none of that ghastly delay when the player and his caddie start hunting for the understudy of the understudy of the Number 4 iron.

Please write to the Rules of Golf Committee and tell them that I for one fully approve their recommendation.

Yours sincerely,
J. BYSTANDER.

From Angus McWhigg, Glenfarg, Roughover.

9/1/37.

DEAR SIR,—All this talk about the New Rule has just brought home to me the fact that caddies are paid for carrying bags of clubs irrespective of their weight. Unless you can see your way to introduce a sliding scale of charges based on the number of clubs used by a player I shall feel it incumbent on myself to put a few bricks at the bottom of my bag so as to bring up the weight and so get my just money's-worth.

Yours very truly,
ANGUS MCWHIGG.

From Frank Plantain, Greenkeeper, Roughover Golf Club.

DEAR SIR,—This is to say that I am well pleased with the new rule, for them holes and depressions on the putting greens won't be near so bad now that golfers and caddies will have less weighty lots of clubs to throw down deliberate on the surface. This being done to annoy them that comes after—and ME.

Although it is not quite the same thing, General Forcursue threw his clubs at Mr. Nutmeg yesterday, after he had lost the match on the 13th, and there is a hole there now you could put half-a-dozen dead moles into; although I must say it was not the General's clubs that done the most damage, but Mr. Nutmeg when he fell down.

Yours, Sir,
FRANK PLANTAIN,
Greenkeeper.

From General Sir Armstrong Forcursue, K.B.E., C.S.I., The Cedars, Roughover.

9th January, 1937.

SIR,—This is to tell you that I consider the proposed limitation of clubs to fourteen a lot of poppycock, for although I only use nine clubs—five of which are niblicks—I dislike having my liberty interfered with in this outrageous manner.

Surely the R. and A. Golf Club has afflicted the world at large with enough rules and regulations without imposing any more, and I shall thank you to write and tell them to withdraw this business from their meeting before I take the matter into my own hands.

If they do not agree you can then inform them that I am going to play with my "Napoleon" again—the club I got a Chinese blacksmith to make for me in Hankow during the Boxer trouble. "Napoleon," you will remember, has a face which I can adjust by means of a screw in the base of the socket to any angle from 1° to 90°, thus giving me seven-and-a-half dozen clubs in one.

So you can tell them to put *that* in their pipes and smoke it.

Yours faithfully,
ARMSTRONG FORCURSUE.

P.S.—At present I use Napoleon to chase the frogs from the greenhouse.

P.S. 2.—I shall be glad if you will give the Steward (Wobblegoose) a bit of your mind. Nutmeg and I have been taking a teaspoonful of pepper in our gin for some time past to keep the cold out, and this morning Wobblegoose actually had the audacity to try to charge us a penny extra for our drinks.

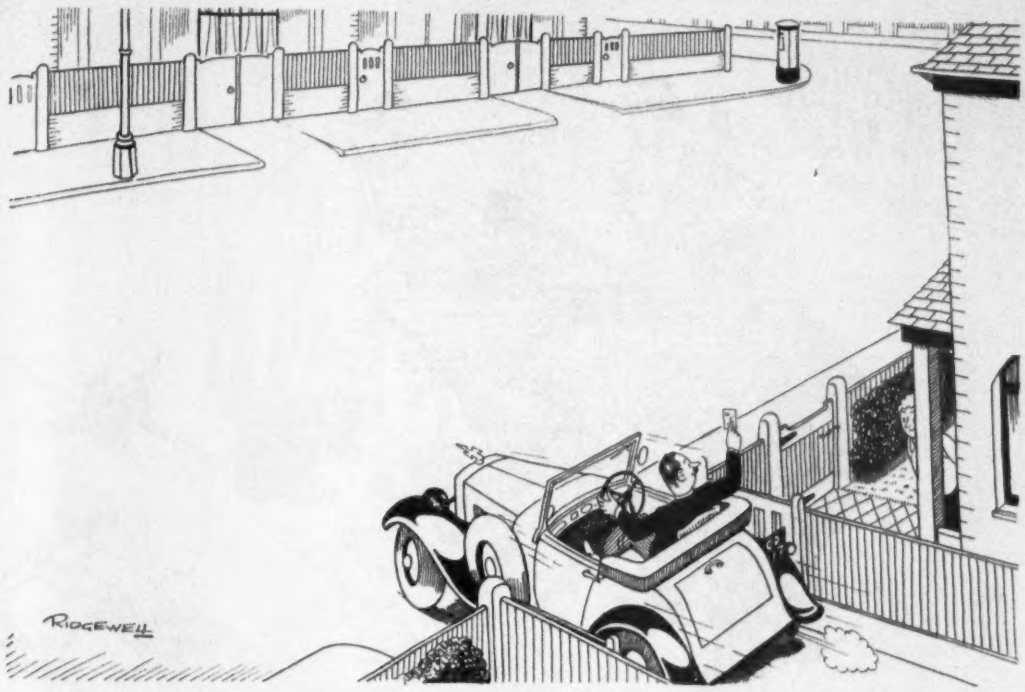
G. C. N.



"IF YOU *MUST* KNOW, IT'S JOAN PRICE."

All at Sea in the Sales

"Exclusive styles in Hats for Cruising in the Millinery Dept."—*Newspaper Advt.*



"SHAN'T BE A MINUTE, ETHEL—JUST POPPING OVER TO THE POST."

The Hireling's Lament

It ain't my lot to go to the meet
On anything else but my own four feet,
'Cos the likes o' me don't get no ride
In a luxury van with a groom inside.
It's 'ammer along on the 'ard tarmac
With 'eaven knows 'oo atop o' me back,
And, take my word, there's some of 'em grim
Can't 'ardly distinguish a ride from a swim.
The bars of me mouth 'ave gone all dead
From carrying blokes with 'ands like lead,
And me back and girth have been that galled
And then come white that I look skewbald.
Me ribs you can count, and all of 'em stare
On a chilly day with a nip in the air;
But 'ow, I ask, can a 'oss look sleek
When 'e's out with 'ounds three days a week?
Three full days till 'ounds goes 'ome—
Small wonder I looks like a curry-comb.
'Unting's a sport, no doubt; but some
Could do with less than a modicum,
And at night in my box when I'm fed and dossed
I pray for the luck of a fortnight's frost.

The Private Papers of Arthur Widdleswick;

or, More Red Tape in the Home

A Staff Problem

In dealing with matters affecting his domestic staff, their conditions of work and so on, Widdleswick was always at some disadvantage, because rarely if ever could the servants be persuaded to adjust themselves to the nicety of his methods. His household staff was never large—my friend's official position and his emoluments from it were alike modest, and although he had a private income, that too, I believe, was quite small—and it may be that in the circumstances some modification of his procedure would on occasion have served him better. His view was always, however, that the means justified the end. He would never accept the converse and more widely supported proposition, and in consequence he always resisted any temptation to take the short cut that might in similar circumstances have commended itself to another man.

That as a result misunderstandings frequently arose in this department of his activities, and that members of his staff were sometimes led to too precipitate decisions through imperfect apprehension of his intentions is, I fear, undeniable. A notable case in point is that in which the services of a valuable cook were lost to him and Mrs. Widdleswick in the autumn of 1928. The history of the incident may be given as it appears in his file Dom./1239/C of that year. The opening minutes are as follows:—

Arthur.

Cook reports that she is suffering from neuritis and that it is being made worse by draughts in the kitchen. She asks for the kitchen-door to be fitted with a draught excluder. Will you please consider? W.W., 8/10/28.

Winifred.

As you are no doubt aware, it will be necessary in the first place for the applicant to complete, in duplicate, Form Dom./Gen. 1. If for any reason (*e.g.*, because of the alleged neuritis) she is unable to do this, the form may be completed by you on her behalf, provided it is signed by her in your presence. In view of the nature of the application, the following additional information should also be given:—

(*a*) Her precise age.
(*b*) The duration of the alleged neuritis.



"Oi, no sniffing, Lady, not at two-a-penny!"

(*c*) the velocity of the alleged draught. A.W., 10/10/28.

Arthur.

Form Dom./Gen. 1 herewith, which has been completed by the applicant under protest. Age is categorically refused. The answers to supplementary questions (*b*) and (*c*) are:—

(*b*) Off and on since Aunt Martha died.

(*c*) Something terrible.

Does this help, please?

W. W., 11/10/28.

Winifred.

The applicant's replies are lacking in precision, but I gather that fuller details would be difficult to obtain. In the circumstances I have no objection to our now proceeding to consider—

(1) What evidence can be adduced that the fitting of the suggested draught excluder will in fact exclude the draught?

(2) What authority can be cited for the belief that the exclusion of the draught, if it is excluded, will beneficially affect the neuritis?

Will you please report on these points? A. W., 14/10/28.

Arthur.

I have interpreted your questions to Cook and the answers appear to be:—

(1) The enclosed cutting of an advertisement from *The Sunday Shout*;

(2) Cook's old mother (deceased), who is reputed to have told her that them draughts is the worst possible thing for the neuritis (*sic*).

Will you please continue action urgently, as Cook has threatened to give notice? W. W., 15/10/28.

I see that my friend also received on this date a note from the complainant herself. It was in the following terms:—

Sir,—The missus says I can ask you when will I be getting the draft exclooder. My nurities is dreadful bad.

(*Signed*) Eliza.

Widdleswick's reply to Eliza seems to be missing from his papers,* but it is clear that he did reply, for the next document on the file is a further note from her dated the next day:—

Sir,—I do not understand all you say, being a poor scollar, but I hope the exclooder will turn up soon as my nurities is that bad. (*Signed*) Eliza.

Meantime Widdleswick had replied to Mrs. Widdleswick:—

Winifred.

I do not consider the evidence on either of the points raised in my previous minute very strong, but as the matter is now stated to be urgent I agree to our considering without delay the respective merits of any types of draught excluder of which we have personal knowledge. Have we any precedent for the purchase of an appliance of the kind in question?

As regards the latter part of your minute, Cook should be reminded that notice can only be accepted as valid if given on Form Dom./12.

A. W., 17/10/28.

The closing minutes are:—

Arthur.

Cook now threatens to leave *without*

* I have since, by the merest chance, found a copy of his reply in a file indexed under "Cook, Thos. & Sons," with whom he had some correspondence in the same year. My friend was rarely guilty of inadvertence of this kind. The general purport of his reply to Eliza was that the matter was receiving attention.



"YES, WE 'RE ALL BETTER NOW. EVEN COOK IS SITTING UP AND GIVING NOTICE."

notice. May this be regarded as constituting a state of Household Emergency and a draught excluder purchased at once? *See* General Rules and Regulations, para. 221—is it?

W. W., 17/10/28.

Winifred.

No; I think you must have in mind para. 122 (*a*). In any case I doubt whether a declaration of Emergency could be sustained merely on the verbal statement you attribute to Cook. I suggest that she be asked to put her threat in writing. Please obtain this statement (Form Misc./1/A), and, if it is in order, the appliance can then be purchased at once. A. W., 19/10/28.

Arthur.

Sorry; too late. Cook left this morning—I fear for good.

P.S.—Please note—Menus for dinner this evening:—

(*a*) Sardines on toast.
(*b*) Cold rice pudding, remains of.

Do you wish to notify proposed guests accordingly?

W. W., 19/10/28.

This last minute by Mrs. Widdleswick actually came to my notice at the time. It happened that I was to dine with my friend that evening and he had the papers sent round to my rooms, noted: "To see. Have you any observations?—A. W." This is the only occasion I can recall of my being asked to endorse one of my friend's files. I replied at once if not quite in language calculated to commend itself to his puristic standards, at any rate in terms which I thought sufficiently free of ambiguity: "I will come all the same. Expect me at 7." And it appears, though I had forgotten it for the moment, that I added: "*P.S.*—Bringing (substantial) remains of cold fowl."



"THESE BLOKES AT THE B.B.C. 'AVE ALL GOT SUCH A SALOON-BAR VOICE, 'AVEN'T THEY, 'ENRY?"

Take It Or Leave It

MOTHER, when we move to our new flat
do you think we *must* take this china cat?
I know it has been in the family for twenty years,
but now I perceive for the first time that it has no ears.
And, darling, supposing we didn't take the marqueterie commode,
and you balanced your Spode
on the table that was in the schoolroom at Number Two—
Wouldn't that do?
It's only that I feel we shall be so very congested,
what with the big chairs and Aunt Sophia's bookcase, and the double-crested
eagles on the mirror touching the ceiling
on one wall; and the water-colour of Darjeeling
by Uncle Bob ruining the other wall;
and then there's the Chippendale bureau from the hall.
Not only is it ugly to have the room absolutely bulging,
but it is also a means of divulging
to the dozen gold-buttoned porters who do not know our ways
that we dwelt somewhat lavishly in former days
and have now sunk. Which of course is true;
but I prefer them to think that it is the view
which has brought us (with a refrigerator five times too big
and a portrait of Great-uncle George in a judge's wig)
to the unknown vicissitudes of flat-life on the seventh floor.
Mother, I've just had a thought! When one opens the door
into the pantry, surely the safe will hit one in the chest!
Dearest, I'm sure it would be for the best
if we placed this life-sized photograph of Cousin Mabel dressed as *Malvolio*
reverently away in a portfolio.
As for hanging the Opie,
I can see there is not a hopie,
unless we put it in the larder.
No, let us make our hard hearts even harder
and take with us instead
dreary necessities like a table, an umbrella-stand, a bed.
Small useful objects, each to stand in its appointed place,
for, seeing that we have an abundance of all things, we yet lack space.
I see no reason why we should not be content,
looking out of the window at the blue firmament;
soon forgetting, so fickle is the heart,
dearly beloved works of art.
We will prove to the world that we can be just as sanguine with or without a Brangwyn.
Let us therefore renounce in open confession
covetousness and the pride of possession,
and bequeath rather to our descendants
nothing but the love of independence.

V. G.

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Forest Lovers

I SUPPOSE it is time we referred to Mr. EDEN PHILLPOTTS as a veteran—perhaps even as an indefatigable veteran—though this expression always strikes me as a little cruel. But how long ago was it that we first read *The Human Boy*? Some time towards the close of the last century, I fancy, though it is true the hero of that work has made one or two reappearances since. In those far-off and happy days we used to think of Mr. PHILLPOTTS as a promising recruit to the school of Messrs. JEROME and BARRY PAIN—one of the New Humorists, as they were termed by the superior critics of the nineties. But since then our author has turned to graver things. In his latest novel, *The Wood-Nymph* (HUTCHINSON, 7/6), he may be said to have assumed definitely the mantle of THOMAS HARDY, which he has now been fitting to his shoulders for some years. He has carved out for himself a slice of territory adjoining the Wessex of the earlier master—Devon rather than Dorset—and is becoming more and more inclined to deal with simple rustic folk and with wild Nature. There is not much of a story in *The Wood-Nymph*; it is just a quiet tale of a village community, the parson and his parishioners, but Blore Wood stands out in it very much as Egdon Heath stands out in *The Return of the Native*. There is more than a trace of HARDY too about the rustic dialogue. I do not know whether this novel is too sober for readers of to-day, but it deserves to be bought, and kept, and read more than once by those who can appreciate good writing.



"IT WAS LIKE THIS, SIR. WOT I SED WAS SPOKE BLOTTO VOICEY AN' NOT INTENDED TO BE OVER'EARD BY 'UMAN EARS."

Rejoicing Desert

A rare novel that ought, I feel, to have been a rarer, *Child of Light* (CAPE, 7/6), might not unjustly be hailed as out of *The Constant Nymph* by *Helbeck of Bannisdale*. A Bohemian desert is made to blossom with Catholic roses, and the feat is performed with spontaneous humour and a grace that a trifle more of solicitude would have rendered distinguished. The story opens in a reclaimed Chelsea slum, where the mouse-like little daughter of *Elvira* the Catholic singer makes friends with the agnostic household of *Sir Eustace* and *Lady Cook*. Ten years elapse and then another ten years, showing, between and after them, the deterioration of *Elvira's Mariella*, married to an unsatisfactory *Vicomte*, and the mystical progress of her beloved *Chantal* —once *Pamela Cook*. After the unforgettable promise of the prelude, the main interest—assuredly the poverty, chastity and obedience of *Chantal*—is too often sidetracked by her world's opposite tendencies. Once Mrs. J. L. GARVIN has succeeded in winning credence for *Chantal's* spiritual experiences she might, while maintaining her delectable backgrounds in London, Paris and the Riviera, have cut down to a minimum the philandering of the rest of her cast.

Unique Document

Nobody who ever heard of the author has to be told that *The Diary of Vaslav Nijinsky* (GOLLANCZ, 10/6), edited by ROMOLA NIJINSKY, is an odd book. The dust-cover sums it up as the description by a very great artist suffering from "split personality" of what a human being experiences in becoming insane, and it is in fact no light

entertainment for the general reader. The constant succession of short, flat, abstract sentences numbs the mind; anyone in search of purely literary pleasure will discover it only for a moment here and there. Such statements as "I want to have millions in order to make the Stock Exchange tremble" (p. 25), or "Oscar always used to voice his opinions in a loud tone; I was offended and nearly fought with him, but my wife stopped me and her mother stopped Oscar" (p. 132), gain in charm, and the simple narrative or reminiscence gains in interest, because of a background which is a mosaic of this sort of thing: "God. I am God. I am God. I am all, life, infinity. I will be always and everywhere," and so on. "People will understand my thoughts," NIJINSKY wrote, "if this book is well published." The book is very well published, with photographs and reproductions of his strange drawings; but many of its unhappy author's thoughts are by no means clear to me, except when he forgets to philosophise and just remembers.

Down on the Farm

I suppose that some people may be a little disgruntled by Mr. ADRIAN BELL'S *By-Road* (COBDEN-SANDERSON, 7/6), which looks like a novel and has no heroine, hardly a hero and no love-interest, and in fact is not really a novel at all but a chronicle of events on the land in Suffolk. All who loved Mr. BELL'S earlier books will be glad to find themselves back in Benfield watching *Rayner*, the new type of farmer, trying out his ideas and creating a great, new, comprehensive farm-business, where fruit-growing and milk-production take the lead and the goods are delivered by the farmer to the customer in not too distant towns. For contrast there are Thrush Hall, where one plays the spinet by candlelight, and *Mr. Colville*, farming according to the best of the older traditions and with a graciousness of life and social relations that all *Rayner's* benevolent fruit-bottling does not achieve. Well, here are two romances, that of success and that of agriculture, and all country-minded readers will delight in their story from first page to last.



"I WANT TO HAVE A LITTLE FLUTTER IN GOVERNMENT STOCK."

Likeness of a Patriot

The middle-class romanticism of the nineteenth century enlists little sympathy nowadays. On the face of it there seems no particular reason why glamour should invest liberal pioneers rather than tory reactionaries. Yet, looking back on the career, say, of *Kossuth* (SELWYN AND BLOUNT, 18/-), you realize the value and necessity of these rhetoricians and fighters, the difficulty and danger of their crusade against vested interests. Herr OTTO ZAREK'S big biography of the Hungarian liberator has two disadvantages for English readers: it is told in a breathless declamatory style, largely in the present tense; and it omits to present any preliminary picture of KOSSUTH'S Europe. True the Hungarians understood their fellow-democrats so little that KOSSUTH himself voted Hungarian troops to help Austria crush Italy. But that is no reason why the larger issues should not be stressed now. This story is predominantly that of a life and the lives it impinged upon; and the precarious rise of KOSSUTH, his duels with METTERNICH, with SZÉCHÉNYI and with BATTHYANYI, his spans of exile in Italy, Turkey, England and America, and the posthumous triumph of his chequered career make curious and occasionally impressive reading.

Feud

For a few moments, in *Black Land, White Land* (GOLLANCZ, 7/6), I thought that Mr. H. C. BAILEY had allowed his impeccable *Mr. Fortune* to make what is sometimes called a complete bloomer. But my expectations, not to say my hopes, quickly faded away, for, although modest *Inspector Underwood* considered that a mistake had been made, *Mr. Fortune* quickly and conclusively shows that nothing had occurred to upset his preconceived plans. In spite of his omniscience, Mr. BAILEY'S investigator is easy to follow, so sound and free from sensation are his methods. Here the quarrel between two landed families and the fatalities arising therefrom give him ample opportunities to exhibit his qualities, and however irritating he may be at times Mr. BAILEY sees to it that his deductions are pre-eminently sound.

Vanity and Vengeance

Mr. FRANCIS BEEDING has left international politics untouched in *No Fury* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 7/6) and is content to make a study of ordinary suburban people. Supported by a clever idea, which I will not reveal, he tells the story of six people who benefited pecuniarily by *Miss Valerie Beauchamp's* will, and quickly found that the increase to their income was more of a burden than a boon. It is true that these legatees had played a cruel practical joke upon *Miss Beauchamp*, but when three of them had departed abruptly from this world and a fourth was in imminent danger of following them they could reasonably be considered to have paid in full measure for their sins. This is a well-constructed story, and if some of its readers guess Mr. BEEDING'S secret, many more will, I think, be taken completely by surprise.

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Charivaria



THERE is a deep artesian well at Broadcasting House. So apparently not all the boring has actually taken place at the microphone.

* * *

Bandits stole eight valuable racehorses from the stables of an American millionaire. Now he knows how the ordinary man feels when he loses *his* stud.

* * *

A poet writing to a daily paper from Cornwall declares that he has had a flower in his garden with a smile on its face. Can it be our old friend the laughing stock?

* * *

We read of a Chicago ex-gunman who has become a billposter and now has to stick them up himself.

* * *



A doctor points out that the habit of wearing two pairs of socks is a help to the sufferer from chilblains. The idea should also be beneficial to the manufacturer of socks.

* * *

According to a report, a man recently tried to break up a Nazi meeting in Germany. As champions of free speech we cannot too emphatically express our abhorrence of such conduct.

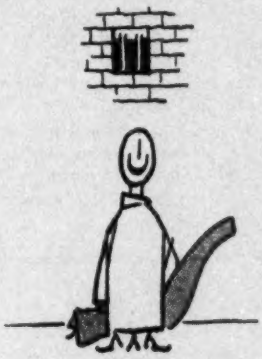
* * *

A K.C. claims that he can get inside any house without forcing a lock or window. There is some talk of making him an honorary vacuum-cleaner salesman.

* * *

"Indoor bulbs are blooming well this year," declares a gardening expert. Blooming well what?

* * *



A fair-ground showman in Germany has been arrested for alleged revolutionary tendencies. Suspicions were aroused when it was found that his roundabouts were travelling from Right to Left.

* * *

A man who is attempting to obtain a water-supply by digging a deep hole in his garden has been buried three times by a collapse of earth. That ought to teach him to let well alone.

* * *

A Trade Journal says that there is an opening for a new warming winter drink. It occurs, of course, about two inches above the chin.

* * *

Nearly six hundred pounds has been paid in a London saleroom for a tankard. Some men would have wanted it filled with beer for that money.

* * *

Lethargy among perfectly healthy foxes is a mystery of the Midlands this season. One rather far-fetched theory is that they are becoming bored with hunting.

* * *

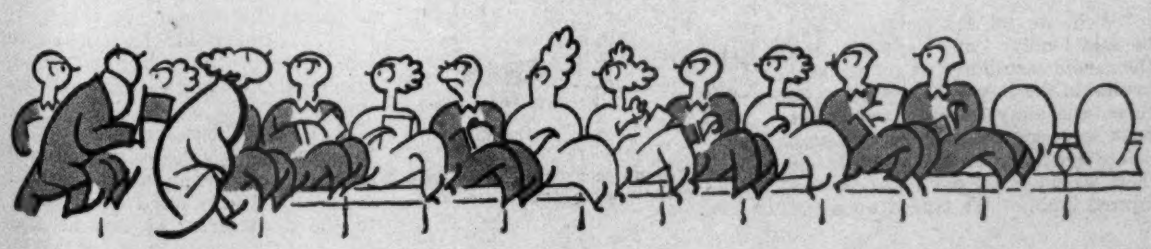
An alarmist declares that we shall not know the next war is upon us until one day we open our morning newspapers. Which sounds like a deliberate slur on the evening Press.

* * *

At a display in Rome, Signor MUSSOLINI demonstrated to General GOERING his prowess with the sword. A further item on the programme, entitled "Rattling the Ploughshare," was unfortunately crowded out.

* * *

The person who arrives late at the theatre, says a theatre manager, is a nuisance. But not quite so big a nuisance as the person who doesn't come at all.



The High Spy

With the departure for the Spanish Front of Bawnoge's one and only volunteer some weeks ago, the village felt that now there was a chance of getting really dependable war news from its own representative. He could also, they hinted, tell them the wholly all about bull-fighting when he came home on leave. Not that this form of entertainment would appeal to them in the least, they said; but they would greatly like to know "th' ins and th' outs" of it. Being a humane man, Shamus Kelly had shuddered at the very thought of the sights that waited him in the bull-ring. "I needn't come back here," he told his grandmother gloomily, "widout I make a full investigation of the whole affair, for they'll be apt to hurricane me wid this queskion an' that."

Shamus was not a letter-writer, and, except for the card telling of his safe arrival in the distant port of departure and making bitter complaints of his sleeping accommodation, no further news of his experiences reached the people of Bawnoge. Then, when the village had settled down once more, regretfully enough, to the sorting out of the conflicting war reports contained in the paper and broadcast by Phelan's loud-speaker, Shamus Kelly came back, pale-faced and limping.

That night the men of Bawnoge turned their backs upon the wireless-set and gathered instead in old Mrs. Kelly's kitchen, where, in spite of the lack of space, room was made willingly for the outstretched leg of the casualty.

When, in reply to questions concerning the actual calibre of the weapon that had brought him low, Shamus admitted that the injury had really been caused by "the heavy stob of a horn," his audience instantly and quite naturally concluded that in his efforts to get first-hand information the volunteer had got right into the bull-ring. This they made abundantly clear; and, drawing a deep breath, Shamus began to tell of his experiences in Spain.

"Well, we set sail right enough," he said loudly; "an' I'm tellin' you the candid thruth but we got a woeful jostlin' in the Bay of Biscay. If so be there was anny furniture upon that boat we were pounded to ointment before gettin' to Madhrid at all; but there wasn't." He paused to ease his injured limb. "We landed upon the pier in Spain," he went on, "an' we marched through the town hopin' for the best." Here the speaker showed an inclination to describe some of the buildings seen upon the way, but his hearers had no interest at all in the architectural beauties "out foreign"—not even in a skyscraper with its incredible number of storeys: "Ay, an' every one of them stories med a lie of be another," one listener said impatiently, having missed the first part of the discourse. What about the bull-fight? he demanded; and how had Shamus got near enough to be gored?

This time the volunteer drew a yet deeper breath. "It wasn't that I was takin' anny individual part in the fight at the time," he admitted desperately, "but I went in an' I passin', the way I could find out about it when ye were so mad for news seemin'ly. I was up agen the very ring when the bull lepped the high fence like a grasshopper. 'Thanks be to God,' I says to meself, ''tisn't one of them Reds I am!' for he had every appearance of bein' greatly annoyed."

With the evident excitement of his audience Shamus grew more enthusiastic. "He med a sudden dhrive at a great grandee of a lad beside me," he said, "but I grabbed him be the coat an' thrun him to a place of safe-ety, and the bull cotch meself in the next rush, an' he knocked me blotto-dee-lux." He leaned forward. "They told me afther the fella was some class of a high international spy," he said.

The last dramatic words had scarcely died away when Johnny Foley came in, bringing with him a stranger and expressing the hope that they had not missed anything by being so late. "He has a constant job loadin' cattle on the boats," he said of his companion, "an' he kem down here to get Brady's lot onto the thrain." But the stranger was gazing at Shamus Kelly, and on his face there was a look of relief. "There's the very man I was tellin' you about," he said to Johnny; "sure I never thought to see him agen." He turned to Shamus: "Wasn't the heart put across in me that night," he told him, "when the Kerry cow took the sudden flew an' pinned you to the ground an' the boat went off to Spain widout you?" He spoke to the gathering again. "He wasn't the first that she played High Spy wid," he said. "She was a caution, so she was." He coughed apologetically. "But I suppose he was tellin' ye all about it himself," he said.

For a little while no one answered, then old Mrs. Kelly spoke, and her tone was grim. "Not to say all," she said—"only as far as the High Spy."

D. M. L.



"And during the sale a free slice of wedding-cake to put under each pillow."

A Lesson to George

Mr. Merry called up the stairs: "George, will you take the dogs out?"

His son George, who was lying on his back on a sofa reading a book of the lighter kind, gave a non-committal grunt and went on reading.

Mr. Merry was distinctly vexed.

"It will be dark soon. They ought to go now," he called.

George grunted.

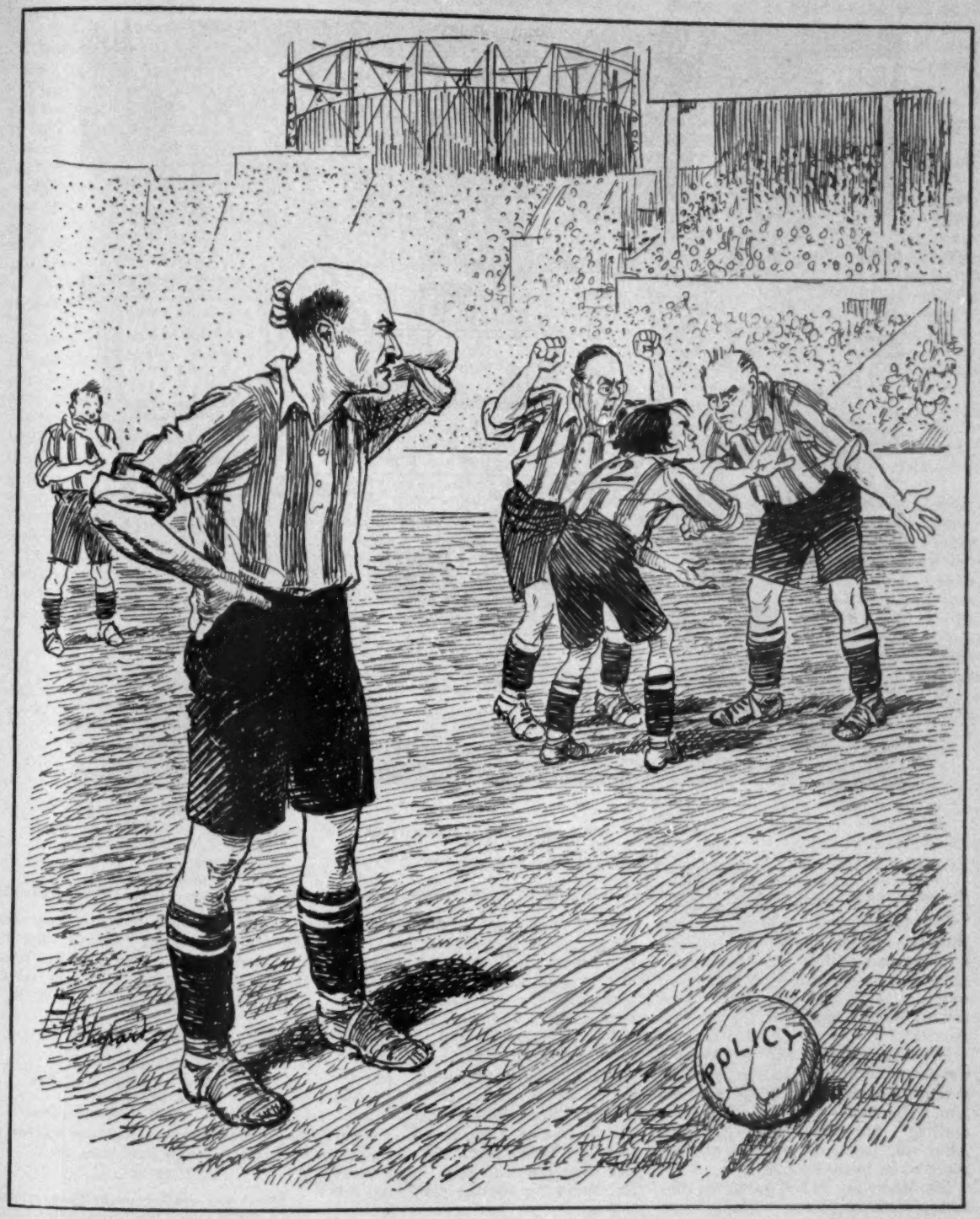
Mr. Merry was extremely annoyed.

"I don't want to have to go ont. I have a cold coming on," he called.

George grunted.

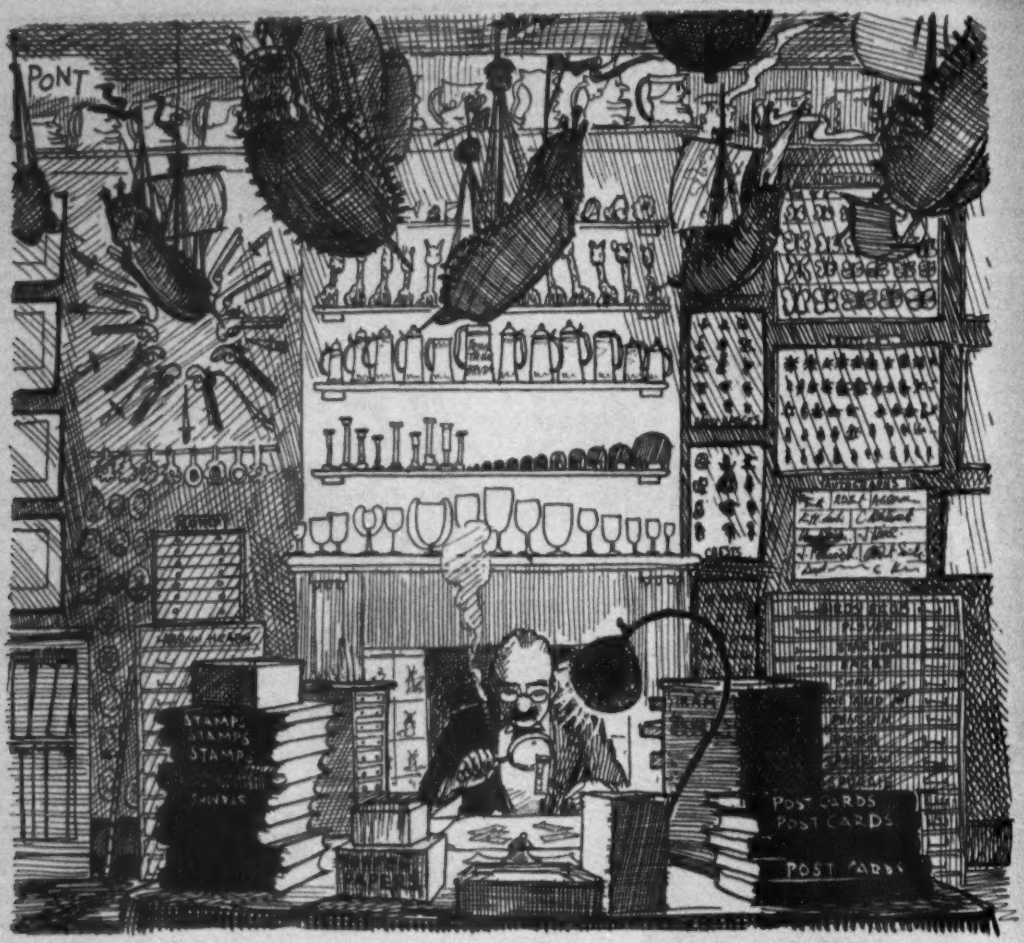
Mr. Merry was infuriated. He grabbed up his hat and coat. "It will be a lesson to him," he muttered, and, calling the dogs, he left the house, slamming the door after him. Undoubtedly he had a cold coming on—that shivery feeling, that aching of the legs. And it was a nasty raw evening. It was madness to be out. Simply madness. But George . . . selfish . . . lazy . . . this would be a lesson to him, though. For it would mean pneumonia, or worse—whatever was worse.

He took the dogs for a longer walk than usual. "It's the last walk they'll get with me for many a day," he said to himself. And he stood about talking to the gardener. At last he said



TRIALS OF A LABOUR LEADER;

OR, THE LEFT WING UNITED FRONT.



THE BRITISH CHARACTER

A PASSION FOR FORMING COLLECTIONS

"Good-night" with so much feeling that the gardener, not as a rule a noticing man, noticed it and wondered, not knowing of course that Mr. Merry was not expecting to stand there talking to him again for months and months.

Mr. Merry went to bed early. George came into his room and asked if there was anything he could do for him. His father said, No, there was nothing. He did not upbraid him. After all, George's punishment was going to be bitter enough.

Mr. Merry lay in bed picturing the scenes of the next few weeks. There would be two nurses—possibly three. George, a contrite George, would be waiting anxiously outside for the latest bulletin. Poor George. It would be a lesson to him.

There would be a general practitioner, and probably a specialist, who would tell George that his father was in good hands and would pull through. The specialist would not know that it was all George's fault; but George would know. For a moment Mr. Merry had the unpleasant thought that he might not recover; but he put it quickly from him. He preferred to imagine a slow recovery, with a chastened George assiduous in attention, trying to make amends. "It will be a lesson to him," murmured Mr. Merry for the last time, and fell asleep.

* * * * *

Mr. Merry awoke next morning and was somewhat disconcerted to find that he felt perfectly well. George came down (rather late) to breakfast.

"I ran a terrible risk in taking the dogs out last evening," said Mr. Merry.

"I don't know. I expect the fresh air did you good," said George, carefully choosing a sausage. A. W. B.

"SAFE CARRIED AWAY
Thieves Saw Through Steel Bar of a Window."
Evening Paper.

Hopes are expressed that they will soon be seeing through steel bars again.

"What the weather might have turned into a dismal failure was turned into a great success by the great response of those cheery optimists who were determined to not let the Lifeboat down."—*Local Paper.*

Even if it split their infinitive to do so, lads.

Riches

"Riches," said Edith sententiously, "don't always bring happiness."

I was engaged in filling up my football coupon, and it was just like Edith to strike a jarring note. I showed her a small folder enclosed by the gentleman who kindly pockets my weekly postal-order. One page of the folder was entirely given up to portraits of recent winners with their families, and it absolutely gave the lie to Edith's platitude.

"Look at that man holding the cheque for £18,421 14*s.* 1*d.*," I said. "Did you ever see a smile like that? And observe the loving way in which he has his arm round his wife. Until the cheque came they had probably been at loggerheads for years, but the £18,421 14*s.* 1*d.* has brought back the sunshine into their lives. Observe too the faces of the children. They are looking at their father with adoring admiration. Last week they probably thought he was a bit of an ass, but all that is changed."

"Perhaps," said Edith; "but it won't last. You will observe from the caption underneath the picture that the man is a gasfitter. How can a man go on gasfitting with £18,421 14*s.* 1*d.* in the bank? He will throw up his job and probably drink himself to death. It is obvious from his expression that Nature intended him for a gasfitter, and as he sits in gilded halls he will think wistfully of the good old days when he plodded along happily gasfitting. A lump will rise in his throat, and he will endeavour to erase it with champagne. His children, intended from birth to follow the family tradition of gasfitting, will become Bright Young People. In a few years the father and mother will be dead and the children unemployed. And if *you* win £18,421 14*s.* 1*d.* exactly the same thing will happen."

"Nothing of the sort," I said, "because I have already planned exactly how I am going to spend the money. I shall continue to work at my present job, invest the capital, and spend the income in defeating the minor irritations of life. To start with, I shall never shave myself again."

"You would look horrid with a beard," said Edith.

"I shall not grow a beard. Every morning as I lie in bed a barber will call, accompanied by an anæsthetist. Merely to have a barber to shave me would obviate only part of the agony, but the anæsthetist will put me to sleep during the operation, and I shall thus cheat civilisation of its worst horror. I shall also take measures to overcome the next daily annoyance—the Search for the Stud. With part of the £18,421 14*s.* 1*d.* I shall buy a handsome chest-of-drawers, and each drawer will be filled to the brim with studs. Moreover, I shall arrange with the local stud-merchant to call once a week and replace all the studs that have been snatched up to heaven in the interval."

"You will lock the chest-of-drawers and lose the key," said Edith.

"I shall have another chest-of-drawers entirely filled with keys," I said airily. "Then comes breakfast. You know how my temper is ruffled when *The Times* keeps flopping down over the bacon-and-eggs? And the difficulty of turning over the page and at the same time continuing breakfast undisturbed? I shall have a special table built with a revolving newspaper-stand just in front of me. By simply pressing a button the next page will miraculously appear."

"And what about cleaning your bicycle?" asked Edith. "It drives you nearly mad every time you do it, and searching for the little balls adds years to your age."

"I have thought of that," I said, "and the solution is perfectly simple. I shall have a new bicycle delivered every week and sell the old ones second-hand. With these little luxuries I have mentioned, and a few others I have in mind, the income from £18,421 14*s.* 1*d.* will easily be frittered away; so you can leave me to finish my coupon in peace, and we can both face the future unafraid."



"I only play golf one day a week."
"Eh, noo I understand. This is no' it."

My Current Affairs Test

(With acknowledgments to "The News-Chronicle")

How to do it.—Five possible answers are given for each question. Prime Minister of Great Britain is (1) Mussolini, (2) Ginger Rogers, (3) Mr. Baldwin, (4) the stout policeman who used to stand in the middle of Ludgate Circus, (5) Chiang Kai-Shek. The right answer to this would be (3), meaning Mr. Baldwin; the others are just a sort of *galère* in the middle of which what the devil is he doing?

Home Affairs

1.—The Minister of War is finding it difficult, he says, to get enough recruits for the Army. His face is full of (1) concern, (2) radiance, (3) doubt, (4) strength, (5) toffee.

2.—Many taxpayers have not paid any attention to the recent income-tax demand-notes. Income-tax is (1) the last refuge of the scoundrel, (2) a method of rendering roofs water-tight, (3) the backbone of the Empire, (4) damnable, (5) a term used by estate-agents.

3.—At several points in London stands are being erected. From these people who can afford it expect to see (1) the Derby, (2) nothing in particular, (3) policemen's backs, (4) an exhibition of red, white and blue grass arranged by the Royal Horticultural Society, (5) the making of a great newspaper, than which, etc.

World Affairs

1.—Herr Hitler recently announced a new decree which forbids Germans (1) to assume a non-Aryan expression, (2) to assume any expression, (3) to express any assumption, (4) to sneeze after or before 5 A.M., (5) to make a crunching sound when eating celery.

2.—The Dictator of Italy is Mussolini. Mussolini is (1) a big man, (2) a small man, (3) a medium-sized man, (4) invisible to the naked eye, (5) the Venice of the North.

3.—America has decided to build new battleships. These will be needed for (1) patrolling the coast of Kansas, (2) providing unemployed admirals with jobs, (3) diversifying the horizon, (4) seven new films about the Navy, (5) using up a lot of battleship paint they had left over last time.

4.—It is reported that an Arabic version of *Mein Kampf* is being distributed in Spanish Morocco. *Mein Kampf* is (1) a book about bears, (2) the last comic song ever sung in the Alhambra, (3) a collection of hints for the amateur flautist, (4) Rembrandt's picture of a flayed ox, (5) an anthology of Eskimo love-poems.

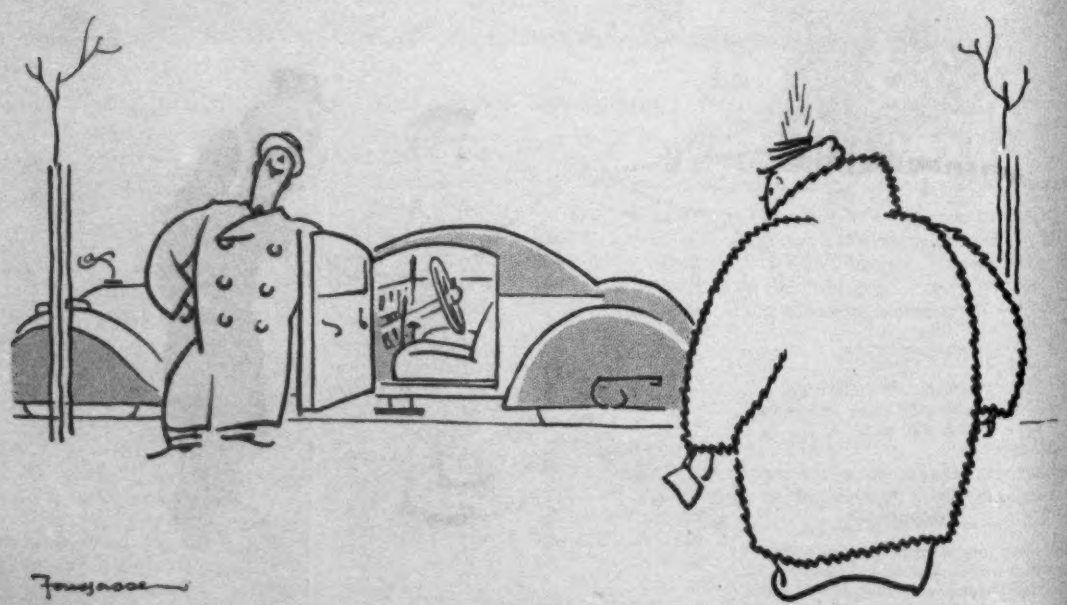
General

1.—"Whan that Aprille with his shoures soote." This is (1) what Mr. Gladstone said in 1888, (2) the writing on the wall, (3) the legend inscribed on Coronation medals, (4) the well of English undefiled, (5) the last cry of Marmion.

2.—The B.B.C. has adopted a new motto. It is (1) "Knock, knock," (2) "Y' can't do that they'll hear," (3) "Unwrung withersoevers," (4) "342.1 m. 877 kc.," (5) "Ave atque valet."

3.—A new regulation requires all cars to be fitted with safety-glass. Safety-glass is made by (1) melting down old monocles, (2) safety-glass makers, (3) a secret process, (4) extracting one of the ninety-two circulating electrons from uranium, (5) coating ordinary glass with a solution of macerated clams.

4.—The British Museum recently made a number of interesting purchases. It made them with (1) *éclat*, (2) *élan*,



"Hop in, Auntie."

(3) *verve*, (4) *brio*, (5) a grant of £500 from the National Art Collections Fund.

ART AND BOOKS

1.—A novel lately published has the title *The Street of the Fishing Cat*. It contains (1) four million words, (2) four hundred thousand pounds, (3) fourteen languages, (4) a tender and charming love-story refreshing in this age of, etc., (5) an enthralling description of methods of work in the peat-polishing fields of the Southern Sahara.

2.—The London exhibition of works by Moholy-Nagy included some "mobiles." A mobile is (1) the balancer inside the ear of a lobster, (2) the part of a motor-car that falls off when it is run into from behind, (3) a toxic condition of the blood, (4) a thing that tinkles, (5) where you insert the point of a tin-opener.

3.—The scenario of the film *Romeo and Juliet* was written by (1) Alf Shakespeare, (2) Stan Shakespeare, (3) Sid Shakespeare, (4) Joe Shakespeare, (5) Shakespeare.

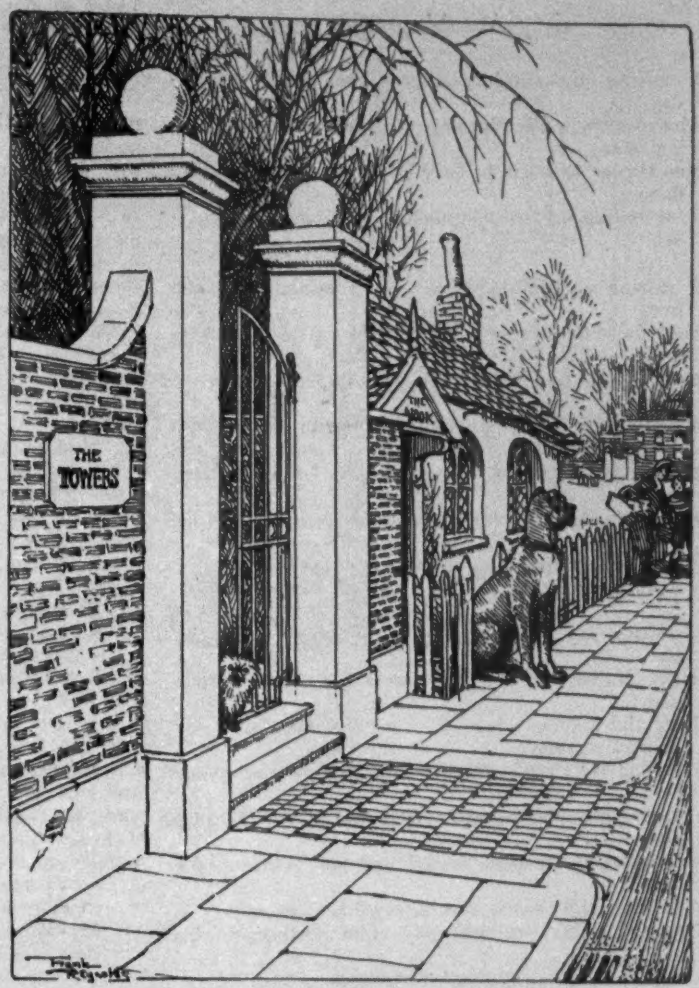
SPORT

1.—The Quorn Hounds had a narrow escape when crossing the railway not long ago. The train they escaped would have been (1) the 9.17 express up, (2) the 9.18 express down, (3) the 9.20 Flying Dustman, making up time after stopping to set down steam, (4) a slow mail train, (5) a train in which the heating apparatus was not working properly.

2.—The fight between Ben Foord and Jack Petersen was postponed because (1) the referee wished to learn Sanskrit, (2) the promoter could not find his way to the bank, (3) the ropes were needed for lowering pails into a soup-vat, (4) one of the turnstiles at Harringay got stuck, (5) another turnstile got stuck.

3.—349,534 people recently paid for admission to watch (1) a man write the Rules of Cricket on the head of a pin, (2) a trained tortoise by the name of Stevenson, (3) a game, (4) massed bands playing what massed bands too often play, (5) a small but indefatigable team of performing leeks.

(In some of these questions I have not included any correct answers at all. However, to make up for this, in others I have included several.) R. M.



THE GUARDIANS OF OUR HOMES

Trunk Call

For me alone the silver wires
Go streaming northward through the shires,
Past sleeping villages and spires
And through illumined cities;
I wait until your bell shall ring,
Five hundred miles encompassing;
Till then they stand and softly sing
Their own Æolian ditties.

They dip in many an English vale
And many a northern hill they scale,
Till up they sweep through Annandale,
Across the Scottish border;
Then, steeply falling to the plains
Of Clydesdale swollen with the rains,
By Hamilton or Newtonmains
They hurry at my order.

Southward they turn for fifty miles
(Dark in the west the hidden isles),
By Cunningham's bare hills, and Kyle's,
And then at last by Carrick's.
And now I know their journey well,
Each twist and turning I can tell;
From far away I hear your bell—
From Aldershot, in barracks.

And in my fancy I can see
The last peg on the wizened tree
Outside your window, bringing me
Three minutes' worth of heaven.
Answer, and open wide the door;
I'm in the smoking-room once more,
At home on leave—and only for
A shilling, after seven.

My Autobiography

I'm writing my autobiography—I'm twenty-one to-day—
I write reviews in *The Nursery News*, and there's lots I've got to say.
People appear to want to hear the beautiful things I've done;
So I'm writing my autobiography—I'm terribly twenty-one.

I'm writing my autobiography—it's rather frank and free.
Nobody more than twenty-four will get a good word from me.
I mean to say in a fearless way how rottenly things are done:
I'm writing my autobiography—I'm terribly twenty-one.

I start at the start and, heart to heart, I tell the eager town
How Mother and Dad were bad or mad and dragged me down and down,
And all I do is entirely due to the way I was begun:
I'm writing my autobiography—I'm terribly twenty-one.

I'm writing my autobiography—I've made a lengthy list
Of every Nurse who stole my purse and all the girls I kissed,
And all the schools where I broke the rules with my intellectual fun:
I'm writing my autobiography—I'm terribly twenty-one.

I'm writing my autobiography—there've been such books before—
Elderly saints with queer complaints and bogus to the core.
Cardinal This and Doctor That have all been overdone,
So I'm writing my autobiography—I'm terribly twenty-one.

A. P. H.

Blood Will Tell

THE ballroom of the giant luxury hotel presented an animated spectacle. At the bidding of Miss Elsa Maxwell, who is of course as well known on this side of the Atlantic as she is in America (to me at any rate), all the brightest stars in the social firmament of New York had assembled to do honour to Mrs. Laura Corrigan and Mrs. Randolph Hearst, who are of course—who are of course—well, of *course* they are.

For the occasion the ballroom had most amusingly been transformed into a realistic farmyard. Chickens pecked inquiringly here and there, pigs moved almost unnoticed among the guests, cows of unimpeachable pedigree lowed from time to time in a well-bred way. One noticed Mr. Noel Coward and Mr. Cecil Beaton among the English party. The scene was typical of any fashionable ball in a barnyard. Observing it, the onlooker felt that now he really knew what the poet meant by "a refined rusticity."

But who is this whose air of rude health and horizon-scanning eyes dissociate him so clearly from the well-to-do throng? And what is he doing here, so far from the wide open spaces? It is Tom Bevington, champion hog-caller, and he is about to give the company a specimen of his art. Listen to him as he throws back his head and, albeit a trifle bashfully, sends the age-old cry ringing round the ballroom.

"Poooeeee," he says, "pig pig, poooeeee, pig pig!"

"Bevington," we may well ask, "what are you calling now?" And the answer of course is hawgs. To that cry no hog of any sensibility can turn a deaf ear. "It is the call, it is the call, my soul," they murmur in their guttural way, and with swinelike impetuosity run furiously to the swill. Like week-end guests at a country-house they recognise the gong. Scholarly readers will remember that it was just such a call as this which induced *Empress of Blandings*, one of Mr. Wodehouse's noblest creations, to recommence feeding after the temporary loss of her favourite pig-man. "Pig-hoo-oo-ey" was the cry recommended to *Lord Emsworth* by *James Bartholomew Belford*, late of America, and it worked, as it was bound to do. In Shropshire, as in New York, the charm is irresistible. (The slight consonantal divergence need not worry us. To a hungry pig "Hoo-oo-ey" and "poooeeee" sound much alike.)

The response to Mr. Bevington's call appears on this occasion to have been eminently satisfactory. We cannot do better than quote *The Daily Mirror* on the subject (from whose columns the facts about this entertaining evening are gratefully borrowed):—

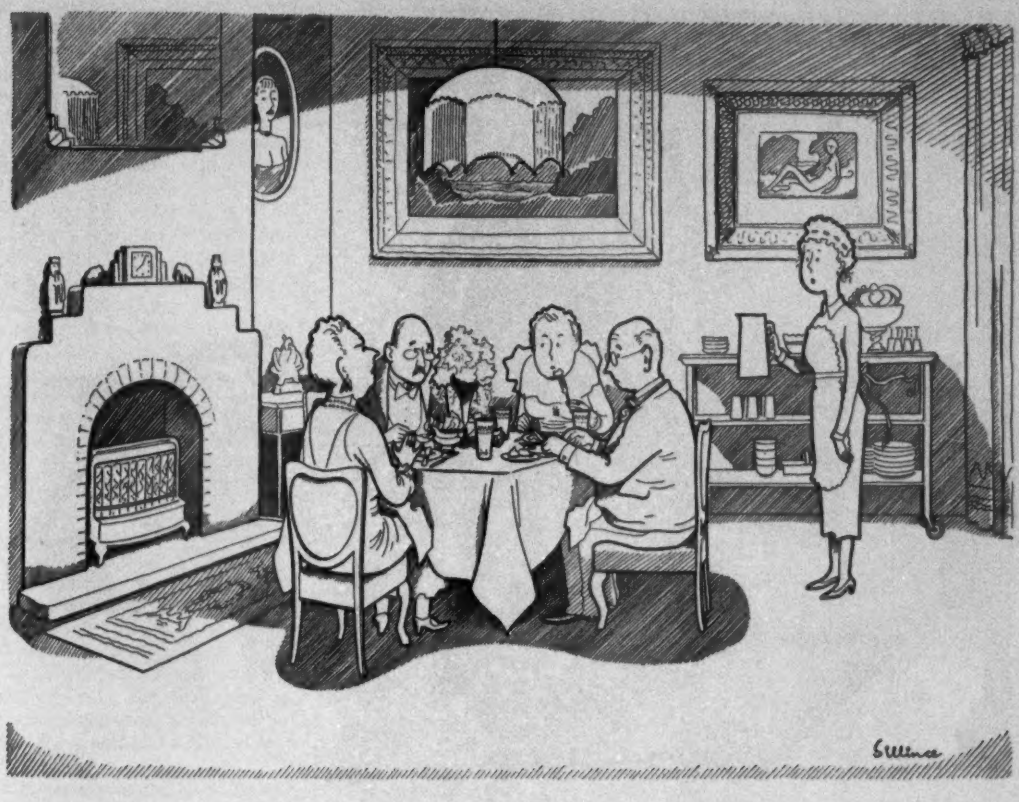
> "RESPONDING TO THE CRIES OF AMERICA'S CHAMPION HOG-CALLER, PIGS SCAMPERED OVER SCREAMING SOCIETY WOMEN AT THE MOST SENSATIONAL PARTY NEW YORK HAS KNOWN FOR TEN YEARS."

The party, you see, was approaching the dimensions of a wow. Bevington, for all his inexperience of Society affrays, had managed to put some life into the proceedings. And how they all enjoyed it—pigs, senators, millionaires, goats, the whole pack of them. It was widely remarked at the time that nobody who has failed to see pigs scampering over screaming Society women really has any conception of what a party *can* be like. Certainly we have had nothing of this calibre in England. Not the most exclusive Hunt Ball, not the wildest Gala Night in Penge or East Molesey has ever risen to heights of revelry like these. English hostesses must look to their laurels.

It will be noticed—and no doubt the statement came as a grievous disappointment to Miss Elsa Maxwell, who is of course even better known in some parts of the world than others—that the "barnyard party" is not described as the most sensational ever. Ten years ago, apparently, it had its equal if not its superior. Way back in 1927, when Calvin Coolidge was President of the United States, Hindenburg was still a power in Germany and the name of Amy Johnson as yet unknown in these islands, the peace of a New York evening was broken by the screams of an earlier generation of Society women. At the nature of this party, unfortunately, we can only guess. Was it perhaps a Zoological Party, at which zebras stalked proudly among the heiresses, peccary thrust their inquiring noses out of the elephant-grass with which the great ballroom had been liberally planted, and hippopotami, answering the irresistible call of "Hip-hip-hoooeeee," burst from the undergrowth and sent the guests shrieking madly for safety? Or was it a Primeval Party with a genuine swamp, in which the company could wallow at their ease and remind each other of the short distance the human race has travelled since it first emerged from the mud?

We don't know. But if it was based on neither of these ideas perhaps some popular hostess would care to take them up?

H. F. E.



"Really, Edith! Barley-water with the fish-course!"

The Dissatisfied Traveller

We sailed to Greece. They did us well;
They stacked our cabins full of flowers,
We seldom had to press a bell,
They trimmed our hair, they ran our showers,
They laid the board without restraint,
They let the rich imbibe in peace;
And yet I have one grave complaint—
The talkies were not pre-release.

We did not climb a single stair,
The lifts had such a soothing hum;
For exercise there was—somewhere—
A green-and-gold gymnasium.
All gentle games there were to play,
And music lapped us without cease;
Yet on this cruise—I hate to say—
The talkies were not pre-release.

I said to Major Haversack
One night in the Byzantine Bar,
"We ought to ask our money back;
I think they've gone a bit too far.
They lure us—it is most unkind—
To see the glory that was Greece,
And when we get on board we find
The talkies are not pre-release.

"That film we saw in Corinth Bay
Was shown last month in Hammersmith.
We Hellenists, I mean to say,
Are not folk to be trifled with!"
The Major said, "That's right, my hat!"
(Good Major, may his tribe increase!)
I got him most indignant that
The talkies were not pre-release.

I would that I could say with pride
I sailed the seas where Jason steered,
I sighed where H. V. Morton sighed,
I sneered where St. John Ervine sneered.
I did all these; but this will mar
Remembrance until my decease,
This wound will irk, this note will jar:
The talkies were not pre-release.



"YOU KNOW, OLD CHAP, I BELIEVE I MUST HAVE CAUGHT COLD AT THAT DANCE. NOSE FEELS A BIT STUFFY."

What a Mind!

FOR many years I have, with numberless other persons, held that *Alice in Wonderland* and *Alice Through the Looking-Glass* were innocent records of topsy-turveydom, filled with the best fun and nonsense. I began to think this when I was a child, and I have been thinking it ever since; and so, I believe, has almost everyone else. The two books, the first of which is now seventy-one years old, or young, and the other sixty-five, must have given unquestioned delight to millions of readers, and the few copies of the first editions which were not destroyed among their eager readers in the nursery now fetch large prices, and in the British Museum the original MS. of *Alice in Wonderland* is rightly considered a treasure.

Of all the books light-heartedly written, I should have said that the *Alice* fantasies were least vulnerable to the slings and arrows of the devil's advocate, and that of all men of genius LEWIS CARROLL was the most blameless. He may have had his anfractuosities, but he was pure-souled, and, as he says in the introductory verses to *Alice in Wonderland*, his primary idea was to amuse and entertain a little friend, Dean LIDDELL'S daughter.

But I was forgetting America. Over there, it seems, everything can be suspect, and Dr. PAUL SCHILDER, of the Psychiatric Division of the Bellevue Hospital and Research Professor in the Medical College of New York University, has been delivering a critical lecture to the American Psychoanalytic Society expressing his serious doubts as to whether LEWIS CARROLL'S books should be read by children at all; more than that, his conviction that they shouldn't. In his address the Doctor set himself to prove the unsuitability of laying before the young a work containing so many "preponderant oral sadistic trends of cannibalistic character."

As to this sadism, Dr. SCHILDER has found plenty of evidence. "The poem of 'The Walrus and the Carpenter,' he maintains, is one of astonishing cruelty.... The Lobster is cooked.... The Crocodile devours the little fish." A homicidal mania is also exploited. "The Queen of Hearts wants to chop off everybody's head. There is a serious discussion whether one can cut off the head of the Cheshire Cat when the head appears alone. It is the fear of being cut to pieces which comes again and again into the foreground. The head of the Jabberwock is cut off too. Thus there is a continuous threat to the integrity of the body in general." There are, furthermore, the incidents recording severe deprivations in the sphere of food and eating. "Alice," Dr. SCHILDER points out, "does not get anything to eat at the mad tea-party." This is dreadful.

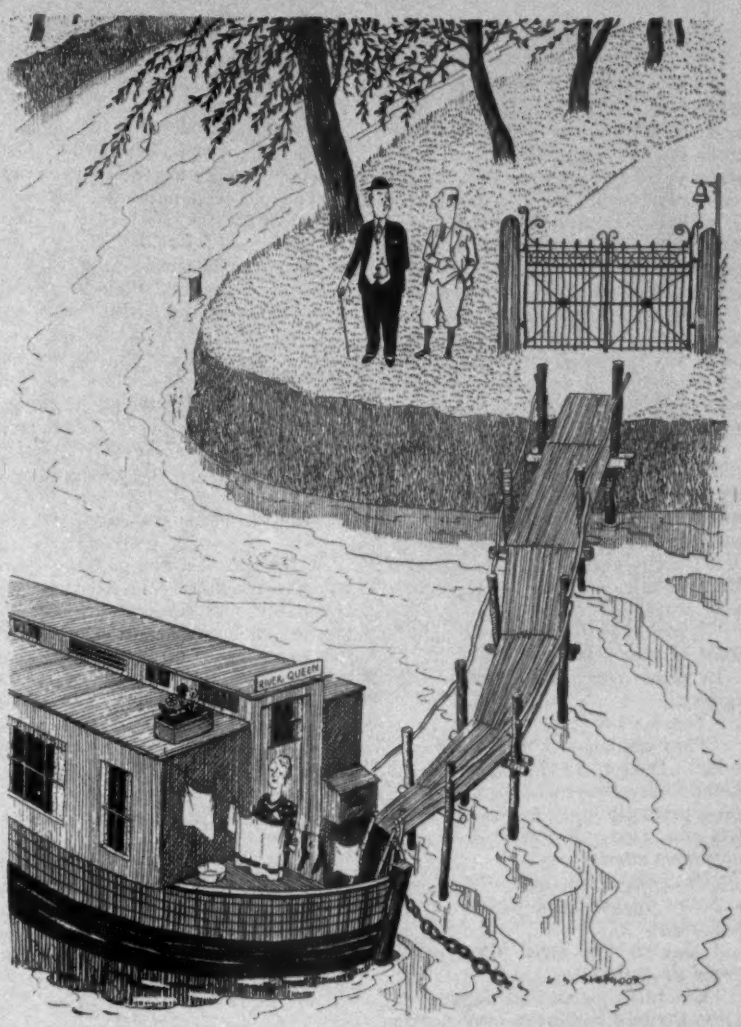
But LEWIS CARROLL (whom the Doctor calls merely CARROLL, which was never his name) could do no right: to one of his little friends he once committed the enormity of writing a letter which began with the last word and finished with the first. After citing instances of verbal jesting, such as the statement that the shoes in the sea have soles and eels, and that no wise fish would go anywhere without a porpoise, Dr. SCHILDER remarks that whenever one starts playing

with words the problem of negation and the problem of opposites will arise; and of CARROLL's portmanteau words, which we have all thought ingenious and funny and many of us have tried to add to, Dr. SCHILDER says, using the terrifying description "schizophrenia," that such inventiveness "signifies the wish of the individual to give up definite relations to the world, which is, after all, a world of regular sequences and of meaning." Which, of course, it is, but hitherto no one has discovered much harm in pretending the contrary.

The cause of the whole trouble, Dr. SCHILDER thinks, is, firstly that CARROLL never got the full love of his parents, and secondly that he became a mathematician, and "it may be that ruthlessness toward time and space belongs to the characteristics of the mathematical talent." In fact, apart from the disastrous effect of the *Alice* books on the young, Dr. SCHILDER is continually upset by the liberties which they take with time and space; and nothing apparently could be worse for children than this. "One may be afraid that without the help of the adult, the child-reader may remain bewildered and may not find alone his way back to a world in which he can appreciate love relations, space and time and words."

But it is certain that Dr. SCHILDER as that helpful adult cuts a very poor figure. In fact he does not want to fill such a part; he is against the insidious criminal CARROLL altogether. He is horrified by CARROLL's insouciant indifference to a condition normally "guaranteed by the vestibular apparatus and by postural reflexes." He shudders when he reads in the *Alice* books that bottles start to fly, candlesticks elongate, a train jumps over a river, Father William stands on his head, the Walrus and the Carpenter find the sun shining at night, the White Knight carries a box upside-down, so that the rain cannot come in but everything falls out, and that his horse wears anklets to protect it against sharks' bites. After an unpalatable dose of such improbabilities, he says of this "world without love," "No wonder that persons faced with so much destructive nonsense finally do not know whether they exist or whether they are part of a dream and will vanish"; which seems to suggest that at any rate a portion of CARROLL's idea has been realised. Not, however, its innocuousness. CARROLL, to Dr. SCHILDER, remains one of the most destructive of writers.

What I want now to read is CARROLL on SCHILDER. E. V. L.



"I BOUGHT THESE ENTRANCE-GATES AT A SALE, JUST TO GIVE THE FINISHING-TOUCH."

Sale by Auction

I WENT to an auction
To bid for a chair;
I bought a stuffed pheasant
Because it was there.

I went to an auction
To buy a divan;
I bought a piano
That wouldn't pian.

I went to an auction
For curtains and things;
I bought an old fiddle
Without any strings.

I went to an auction
To buy me a bed;
I bought an old bundle
Of music instead—

All twiddly old "pieces"
And ancient quadrilles
Once played by young ladies
In flounces and frills,

While gallants Victorian
Turned over the leaves,
Bewhiskered as tom-cats
That court on the eaves.

I went to an auction
Equipped with a list
Of bargains desirable
Not to be missed.

Of the things that I went for
I didn't get one;
But what did it matter?—
I'd plenty of fun! C. F. S.

No Mill, No Meal

At the bottom of our field runs—when it is lashed by the rain—a small and muddy stream, which eventually finds its way into the Wash. About sixty years ago someone thought that the stream ought to do a bit of work. The thought materialised into a mill. The mill, like BROWNING'S Gibraltar, is grand and gray—if you allow *grand* its French meaning. It has four storeys. The twenty windows facing the cottage which Joan and I replanned and occupied two years ago come Michaelmas are arranged with a symmetry reminiscent of the artistic productions of our small Elizabeth.

The mill-wheel seldom clacks. Our neighbours clack a good deal. People who call on us don't talk about the weather. They talk about the mill. At first their remarks used to madden us. Mrs. Dexter, settling herself on our sofa, would give tongue.

"What a *pity* the mill is right in front of your windows!"

In those early days we cordially agreed.

"Yes, *isn't* it," we would say.

"They don't *use* it now, do they?"

Mrs. Dexter, having lived in the district fifty times as long as we had, knew perfectly well to what extent the mill was used. But we would make courteous answer.

"Oh, just occasionally. They grind a little chicken-meal or something. Not *wheat*."

A day or two later Miss Sinister would drop in.

"Yes, milk, please—no sugar. What a *pity* the mill is right in front of your windows!"

"Yes, *isn't* it."

"They don't *use* it now, do they?" And so on.

After a while we grew used to the mill. Then we got to know the bent old miller, who might have come direct from DAUDET, and we began to have an affection for his mill. Our neighbours did not share this feeling.

Along would come Colonel Tergum, ostensibly to chat about a gardener.

"What a pity," he would bawl, "the mill is right in front of yah windahs!"

"Oh, I don't know," Joan would reply. "After all, one needn't look right at it, need one?"

But the Colonel would go on just the same. "They don't use it, do thah?"

Old ditherer!

After all, they were *our* windows. If it wasn't exactly our mill, it formed part of our landscape. It might be ugly, but who had to look at it? We had. And all this chat wouldn't make it any prettier.

I nearly quarrelled with a man who was staying with us because he added a new bit to the usual dirge and suggested that dynamite was the only cure.

"Look here," I said to Joan—"we shall have to do something about this. It's unfair that we should have to choose between being friends with our mill and milling with our friends."

We kept ourselves polite by making a game of it. If Miss Altera Pars, for example, said as she drew off her gloves, "What a pity the mill . . ." Joan paid me a shilling. If, when we had replied to her opening, she was moved to say, "They don't *use* it now, do they?" I paid Joan half-a-crown.

At the end of a month I was four-and-sixpence down—the difference between eight shillings and five half-crowns—and we called the game off, being now as unmoved by hostile criticism of our mill as was the dear old thing itself. Almost we could afford to think our own high thoughts while callers prattled on. Almost it sufficed to give at intervals the stock interpolations without paying attention to what the callers were saying. Almost.

The simultaneous visits of old Lady Latus and Mrs. Costa taught us that "almost" is not "quite." It fell to me to chat with Mrs. Costa, who gushes and has a baby, while Joan kept the ball rolling with the dowager. It was not long before the mill loomed up in the conversational haze.

"Just occasionally," I heard Joan say. ". . . grind . . chicken-meal."

So soothing.

Mrs. Costa gurgled on. Then she seemed to await some reply from me.

"After all, one needn't look right at it, need one?" I asked dreamily, just conscious that Joan was quoting our late visitor's dictum.

"Dynamite is the only cure," she said.

A sudden silence brought us both back to earth. Then we discovered that Mrs. Costa had been asking me what I thought about her baby, and that Lady Latus, who has trouble with her complexion, had seized the chance of asking Joan to recommend a beautifier.

Well, it serves them right for disparaging our picturesque old mill.



"IT CERTAINLY WASN'T THERE AT THE MATINÉE."

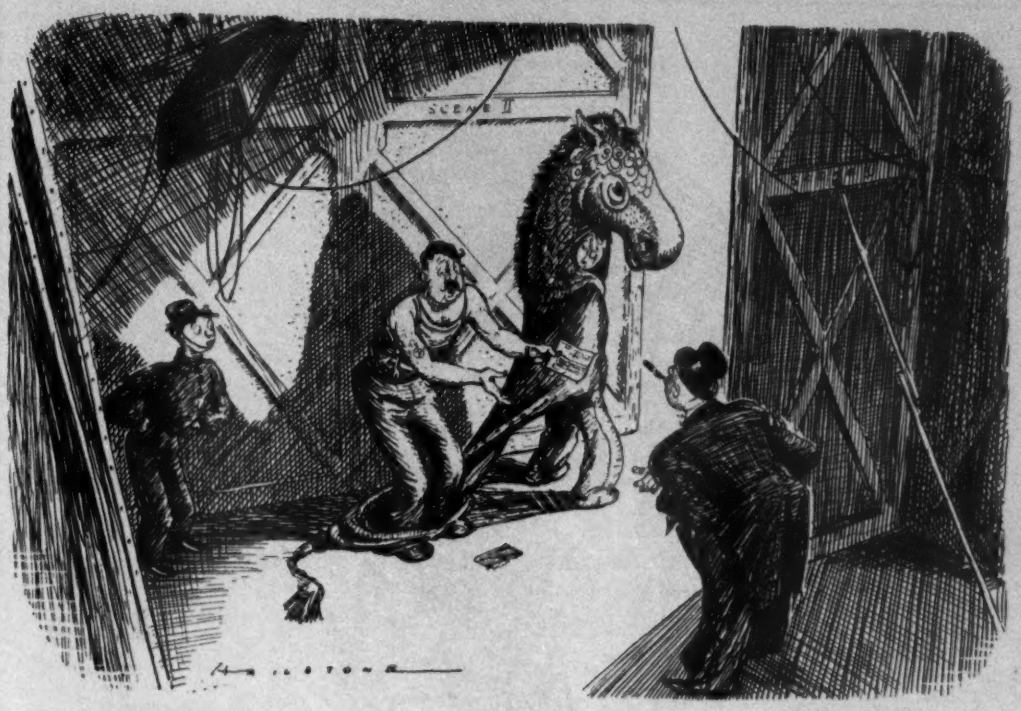
Cross-Questions and Back-Answers

Hussein el Dix, the Beduin, is in complete agreement with those rulers and diplomats of various foreign Powers who complain of the idiosyncrasies of the British character, which are such that it is impossible for a member of any other nation to foretell how they will react in certain situations.

The English of course are mad—this has been an undisputed fact for many centuries in the East—and Hussein has no complaint against this; the trouble is the madness is not consistent. Hussein owes his position in the world entirely to this well-known insanity, for he is employed as keeper in a valley in the desert by a mad English Bey who in the full blaze of the sun, with his equally mad friends, will race after partridges with a gun when any man in his senses would sit in the shade and obtain double the number of birds by employing the local Arabs to catch them in fall-traps.

It is when this madness takes the form of jesting that it is so inexplicable. A joke is understandable, if regretted, on those occasions when everything is proceeding according to plan; but the Englishmen, God help them! make a jest of matters when affairs have gone awry.

There was the occasion, be it remembered, when the Bey, who had



"LUMME, GUVNOR, 'ERE'S A PRETTY GO! LISTEN—'IND LEGS OF ELEPHANT ILL. CAN YOU COME?—COCHRAN.'"

missed ten birds in succession, shouted angrily, "Ho, Hussein, go fetch thy old woman; she will shoot better than I," and when the *sitt* (lady), much flustered and very coy, was produced, it transpired that she was not required, this being but a jest; though why a man should joke over matters concerning the harem is known only to Allah.

Then, again, when that fat English Pasha shot with the Bey and failed, by reason of his girth, to get within shooting distance of any bird, did not the Bey say angrily, "Next time that fat Pasha shoots, Hussein, see to it that there are in front of him birds with hobbles on their legs and feathers cut from their wings"? This, mind you, was a direct order, and what more reasonable, for do we not all have to placate the Great, flatter them and make their paths easy? Partridges were therefore trapped alive and treated according to the Bey's command, but, alas! when the Pasha discovered what had been done to the birds he had shot there was much anger and English "damandblast," and the wrath of the Pasha against the Bey was as nothing compared with the wrath of the Bey against his faithful keeper, Hussein.

In all things, therefore, Hussein decided, do the English jest and the words they say have no meaning, neither do their questions require a straight answer. Then one day there came to the valley a new *Ingleezi*, a Great One also, for *moraslas* (orderlies) ran around him like flies and called him "Excellency." He talked much, and he was more mad than most English, for he studied the ways of the birds of the air and wrote in a book words concerning them.

"Come hither, Hussein," called the Bey. "His Excellency would ask thee questions about birds, and as an Arab thou knowest everything that flies."

This doubtless meant much mirth of the English kind, and Hussein waited for it with a smile of anticipation.

"Does thou know the sand-grouse and his ways, Hussein?" asked his Excellency.

"Wallahi! Yes, your Excellency. I know him as I know my own mother."

"And where does the hen-bird make her nest and raise her young?"

"Far away in the desert, amid the sand."

"And does she come in to the springs for water every day?"

The time for the jest must be near at hand and Hussein's brow wrinkled with anxiety that he should not be found wanting when the moment arrived.

"Yes, Excellency—every morning about one hour after sunrise."

"And now," said the Great One impressively, "can you tell me how she takes water out to her young in the desert?"

This was the signal for the jest without a doubt, so let it be a good one such as the *Ingleez* love.

"She carries it out in *zamzamiyas* (water-bottles)," replied Hussein with a delighted grin.

"What an exceedingly insulting man!" said His Excellency, turning to the Bey indignantly. "Are all your Arabs trained to give back-answers in this fashion? Take him away; I do not desire to have further words with him."

C. S. J.

Commercial Caution

"This Calendar is sent to express —— & Sons Limited appreciation of your patronage."—*From a Trade Calendar.*

"Powder makes a delightful finish, but it will not work miracles by itself."
Beauty Chat.

A match is necessary to get the full effect.



"It's delightful to see you again, General, and looking so well."
"It's delightful to see *you* again, my dear lady—looking anyhow."

I Can Make 'Em Cry.

I'm always told my disposition's sunny
And my conversation's versatile and bright,
But however hard I try *I can't be funny*
In the money-making rubbish which I write;
And it really seems a shame when an author's single aim
Is to turn out work that's chocabloc with laughter,
That the fate-deciding gods should increase the heavy odds
Against the very end that he is after.

I can make 'em cry but I can't make 'em laugh;
I'm strong on the sob-stuff but weak on the chaff;
I can make 'em go wild with a little chee-ild
Who is found in a storm by its penniless mother,
Or a virtuous girl who says No to an earl
And slaves day and night for her drink-sodden brother;
But whenever I write something frothy and light
My publishers' figures fall down,
For I can't raise a smile from connubial sin,
An embarrassing scene at a desolate inn,
Or a mother-in-law who sits down on a pin—
In fact, they are met with a frown.

"The public wants to laugh," declare the journals,
Who reckon that they know its fickle taste,
But I've found that comic curates, chars and colonels
Are nothing but a money-losing waste;
So, much as I object to the type of intellect
That wallows in the tear-producing novel,
It only goes to show that I can't produce the dough
From anything but squalor in a hovel.

I can make 'em weep, but I can't make 'em laugh
I'm hot on the pathos but dud on the chaff.
They'll encore and cheer when I give 'em a peer
Who plays "Sole Mio" for pence in the gutter,
And they'll welcome with joy a half-starved orphan boy
Who feeds down-and-outs with his bread and his butter;
But I've had enough of this terrible stuff—
I want to make everyone roar;
But when I embark on some frivolous plot
The critics condemn it as absolute rot
And my readers insist that I *ought to be shot*—
So I have to go on as before.



THE WANDERING ARYAN

["GENERAL GÖRING is expected to visit Poland next month . . ."]

Impressions of Parliament

Tuesday, January 19th.—The House of Commons met this afternoon for a Session which promises to be more than usually important, even apart from the Coronation. In the first rank of the problems which call for attention are the financing of Defence, the continued distress of the Special Areas, and the difficulties of isolating the war-germ in Spain; and only shortly after these come the National Scheme for Physical Training and a Bill to reform the Factory Law.

The first Question-time for a month discovered much pent-up curiosity.

Sir SAMUEL HOARE'S statement that the recent dismissal of five dockyard workers was due to subversive activities and only decided on after the cases had been thoroughly investigated by a body of permanent officials failed to satisfy Mr. ATTLEE, who announced, after Sir SAMUEL had told the House that in the interests of State security the men had neither been informed of the charges against them nor been given an opportunity of defending themselves, that he would raise the subject at an early date.

When Mr. MALCOLM MACDONALD moved a financial resolution by which the maximum amount of the Government's contribution to schemes of Empire migration would be limited to £1,500,000, instead of £3,000,000 as had been previously the case, he explained that even in the best migration years the Government's expenditure had never reached the new figure, and said he was confident that migration would before long be a great Imperial need. Mr. BEVAN was all against voting any money for luring young people unwarrantably to the ends of the earth, and a number of Conservatives expressed their natural pain at the reduction, but the MINISTER got his resolution.

The chief event of the day was Mr. EDEN'S speech on the foreign situation. Intervention in Spain, he said, was not only bad humanity but also bad politics, for once the war was ended the Spanish people would be too proud to tolerate any foreign domination; he hoped it would prove possible, even without the help of the two contesting parties, to stop the flow of volunteers. Reassuring reports had been received about the rumours of German penetration in Morocco, though the situation there would be watched; and there could be no doubt that the tension in the Mediterranean had been eased by the Anglo-Italian Declaration, which had given an opportunity to make clear to Italy, in view of disquieting reports about Italian occupation of the Balearics, that the integrity of Spanish territory must still remain intact—this being in contradiction to Signor MUSSOLINI'S recent statement about Catalonia. Mr. EDEN wound up with an appeal to Germany to turn from a policy of economic isolation and the international antagonism to which it led, to co-operation with other nations in an effective League for the peace which the vast majority in every country so ardently desired.



A TRIAL RUN

"Economic collaboration and political appeasement are indivisible."—*Mr. EDEN on the eve of his departure for Switzerland.*

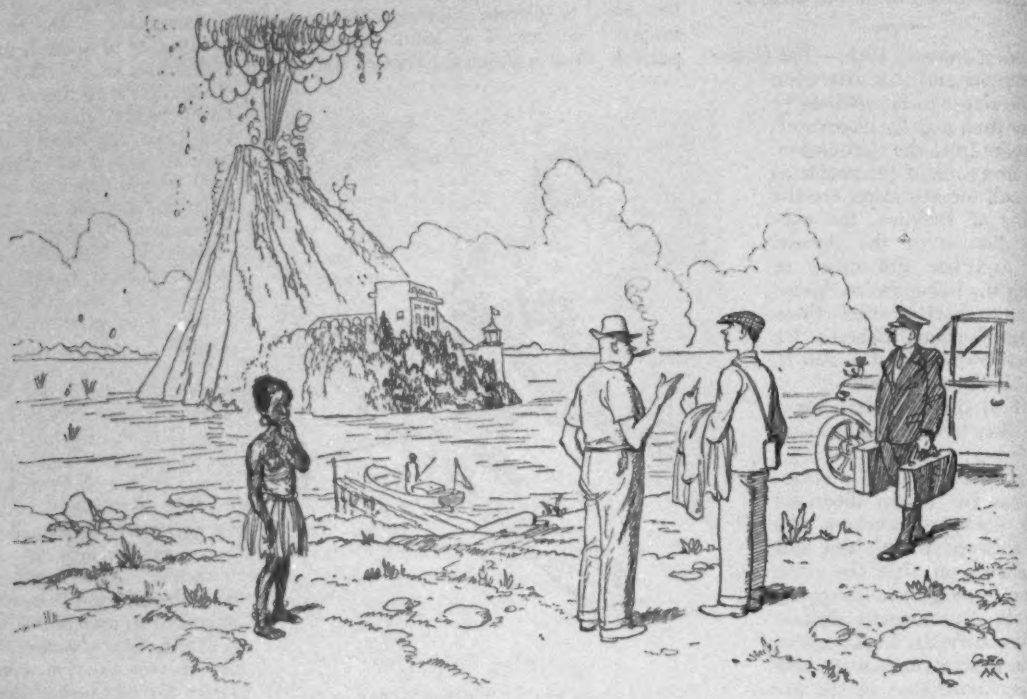
On the whole a comforting speech, though it did little to moderate Mr. ATTLEE'S bitterness that the Spanish Government had been denied arms, or Sir ARCHIBALD SINCLAIR'S conviction that the Cabinet were "drifting like sands before the winds of Fascist violence." Those members of it recumbent on the Treasury-dune appeared to remain unabashed.

Wednesday, January 20*th.*—Not a very exciting day, especially for vegetarian Members; but the House put in a lot of good work on the Livestock Bill which Mr. W. S. MORRISON personally recommended. It proposed, he explained, that imports of meat into this country should be regulated by the producers themselves in collaboration with their fellows abroad, or, failing this, by the Board of Trade. Behind these new defences a Livestock Commission, responsible to the Minister, would distribute a cattle subsidy of £5,000,000, reorganise markets and direct three experimental schemes for centralised slaughtering.



Mr. Punch to the LORD CHANCELLOR *(formerly President of the M.C.C.).* "WELCOME BACK TO LORDS!"

The Bill met with plenty of criticism but little determined opposition. Mr. TOM WILLIAMS resented the absence of accurate estimates and put the usual Socialist objection to swelling private profits at the public expense; for the Liberals Sir FRANCIS ACLAND feared that farmers were getting a subsidy without providing an improved service; and Mr. BOOTHBY, who was otherwise enthusiastic about the Bill, regretted its failure to set about the reform of Smithfield Market, which he considered urgent.



"I FEEL I'VE BEEN RATHER DONE BY THE AGENT WHO SOLD ME THIS ISLAND. HE SAID SOMETHING ABOUT CENTRAL HEATING, BUT HE NEVER MENTIONED THE VOLCANO."

As Others Hear Us

The Good Daughter

"Now, mother dear, here we are, and I hope you're going to enjoy your treat. Where would you like to sit? Cousin Aggie, where are *you* going to sit?"

"Well, dear, I'm sure I don't——"

"Perhaps if mother went in the corner—— Do you think you'd like the corner, mother?"

"What does Cousin Aggie——?"

"Oh, anywhere, anywhere. Where would your mother like to be?"

"Yes, mother dear, it's your treat."

"Quite right; it's your mother's treat."

"You'd like the corner, I expect, mother. There—now you can see the room. Let me just—— Oh, I'm sorry, Cousin Aggie, was that your umbrella? Never mind, I'll get it later; I just want to get mother settled—oh, was that your head? I'd have picked it up in a minute if only you'd waited. *Now*, mother, if you can just squeeze—— Oh, I beg your pardon, could I just—the tables are rather close together, aren't they?—but if I might move yours the least little bit, so that my mother could get past. . . It's all right, mother dear, don't fuss—I'm only going to—— I'm so sorry—did I do that? The jug must have been rather full. Just one moment. Now, mother!"

"Wouldn't Aggie like to sit here?"

"No, no."

"No, really, mother. Cousin Aggie would like to sit opposite, I know, and I'll come here beside you and keep you in order—ha! ha! ha! I'm just going to push the table forward again, very carefully. Now, dear, what about your bag and your gloves and the library books?"

"Let me, Harriet——

"No, no, Cousin Aggie, it's all right. I only want to get them out of mother's way. (She gets fussed.) Suppose I take your bag for you, mother dear?"

"I can manage quite well."

"You'd better let me have it, I think. It's in your way there—it is, really. And your gloves too. And the books."

"Shall I——?"

"No, no, Cousin Aggie. I'll put them on the floor, then they won't be in anybody's way. The only thing is, *shall I forget them?* Perhaps I shall. I wonder what would be the safest thing?"

"Well, at least give me back my bag, dear. I'd *rather* have it."

"Better keep them all together, mother dear."

"But my handkerchief is inside the bag."

"All right, darling, don't get fussed. I'll take the handkerchief out and give it to you, if you like. (I don't want her to get fussed.) There! Here we are! A nice silk hankie!"

"I don't care for the silk ones so very much. What's happened to all my beautiful white ones?"

"They're not really as nice as the silk ones, mother dear. You know you *really* like the silk ones very much. You only *think* you prefer the others. Doesn't she, Cousin Aggie?"

"I couldn't say, dear, I'm sure. Hadn't we better order tea?"

"Of course we had. I'll just get rid of these things. I wonder whether they're using that chair over there. . . . Would you very much mind letting me have that chair, if you don't want it? Just for my mother's odds and ends, if I may . . . (Eighty-seven.) Thank you so much. *Now*, Cousin Aggie, if you could just move back . . .

That's splendid! What about some tea? What is it, mother dear?"

"Nothing, dear."

"You're cold. Or are you too hot? I think perhaps we've chosen a table *rather* too near the fire. Isn't that it?"

"No, no."

"Then it's the draught. That's what it is. There's a draught just at the back of you, from that door. Look here—change places with me. Cousin Aggie won't mind moving, I'm sure."

"Hadn't we better give the order for tea first, Harriet?"

"Well, perhaps we'd better—except that I *don't* want mother to be laid up with a stiff neck to-morrow. She will be if she sits in a draught—that's an absolute certainty. I'll just change places. . . . Sorry, Cousin Aggie. There! Now, mother dear, *you* go over there . . . (I'm so sorry, my mother is just moving out of the draught. Eighty-seven. We have to be careful!) Now, then—Indian or China, Cousin Aggie?"

"China for me, dear."

"One China and two Indians. Yes, mother dear, really. You know China tea doesn't *really* suit you, even if you *feel* as if it did. And what about some brown scones and butter?"

"Haven't they any muffins, dear? Let me have a look at the list."

"It's no use, mother, you can't read it without your glasses. You can have some brown scones and butter, or toasted tea-cake, but I really think muffins would be madness. Why not a nice scone?"

"I'd rather have a muffin, Harriet."

"I know, mother, but we don't want you to get indigestion, do we? Two brown scones and butter, please. What about you, Cousin Aggie?"

"Tea-cake, dear. And what about ordering some jam?"

"Very well, jam. It's a festive occasion, after all. We'll *all* have strawberry jam. Oh, yes, mother dear, you *do* like jam. I'll spread it for you. (I don't want her to get fussed.) Now, isn't this fun? Better take off your coat, dear. I'll help you . . . That's splendid! The only thing is, would you be more comfy further from the fire? Honestly, I believe you would. We can easily move . . . Where are your bag and your gloves and the library-books, I wonder? Cousin Aggie, you wouldn't mind just getting up . . . (I'm afraid of mother's getting fussed. She's looking rather like it already. I can't think why)."

E. M. D.

Drift South

Ah canna thole their English ways,
Ah dinna like their English claes,
  Ah weary for the Clyde;
They gar me feel an awfu' gowk,
Ah'm edi'tet for ma hamely fowk—
  It's sweirt Ah am tae bide.

There's mair tae ilka job than pay,
Ah dinna min' the hauf they say
  For thinkin' on Cam'slang;
Ah'm wae tae see the cars alicht
Swing doon the Glesca' Road at nicht
  An' High Street when it's thrang.

An' though Ah'm no a saucy chiel,
Ah'm gyte tae get a Scottish meal
  An' smokies tae ma tea;
The English canna even swill,
Ah *can't* get fou on English yill—
Oh, whaur's ma barley bree?

What is He Sounding Now?

"TRUMPETER'S £1,531 DAMAGES FOR BLOW."
Daily Paper.

"Another fox found in Cotton Breeches was also killed."—*Hunting Report.*

And quite right too—the bounder!



"THE NEXT PLACE I TAKE I'LL JOLLY WELL MAKE *CERTAIN* THEY'RE NOT FANS."

At the Play

"CROOKED CROSS" (WESTMINSTER)

Crooked Cross at the Westminster Theatre is *Romeo and Juliet* in very modern dress, and not less tragic in its conclusion. *Lexa* (Miss ANNE FIRTH) is the daughter of a typical Bavarian family, and her brothers in this year 1933 have found occupation and hope in the growing ranks of the National Socialist Party. But *Lexa* loves *Moritz* (Mr. CLEMENT MCCALLIN), and *Moritz* is indisputably non-Aryan. He loses his post at the hospital in the First Act and by the Third he is attempting to cross the frontier by night to seek a new life in Vienna.

Although Miss SALLY CARSON has written a highly topical play, in the result the political setting seems accidental. It provides an occasion for a lovers' parting and for high tragedy, but she has not managed to write a play about modern Germany. *Lexa's* brothers, *Helmy* and *Erich* (Mr. STEPHEN MURRAY and Mr. ROBIN KEMPSON), and their friend *Otto*, a Storm Troop leader (Mr. RICHARD FLEURY), continually and emphatically say how much the new movement means to them and try to make their old parents and their sister equally keen. They are sorry that their sister's engagement to a Jew becomes an increasing family embarrassment, sorry that their friend *Moritz* has now no prospects, but quite clear that their first loyalty is to the Party which is to cleanse and rejuvenate their country.

Miss CARSON deals out the remarks with an even hand, but she has not the power of entering into the Nazi mentality, while she has the power to see very clearly and poignantly the suffering and loss which come when a brilliant young doctor like *Moritz* has his profession closed against him. The result is a good study of individual tragedy but not a political play. And some of the force of the lovers' tragedy is lost through the abundance of self-analytical adolescent phraseology in which both *Moritz* and *Lexa* indulge. Remarks like "But how important am I to myself—that is the question," cause us to see hero and heroine as living in an illusory world with their day-dreams, suffering indeed when they are separated and their marriage is indefinitely postponed, but not summing up in themselves the particular tragedy of conflicting loyalties. They are both of them individualists normally indifferent to large general movements, and the dramatist who is so at home in their scenes with each other cannot put the large general movement on to the stage. Very few dramatists can.



CHRISTMAS LOVE-TEST

Lexa . . . . . MISS ANNE FIRTH
Moritz . . . . . MR. CLEMENT MCCALLIN



A PRE-NAZI GERMAN

Erich . . . . . MR. ROBIN KEMPSON
Herr Kluger . . . . . MR. CECIL TROUNCER

Perhaps the absence of humour is deliberate and just in this picture of lower-middle-class German life, but it has an unrelieved effect, so that we should have been grateful even for a conventional comic servant, and are grateful for the very mild eccentricities of *Herr Kluger*, the father of the family, as Mr. CECIL TROUNCER displays them.

The First Act is the most successful, with the symbolism of the decorated Christmas-tree round which a united party dances, greeting a new year full of hope; but as the action quickens the successive scenes —and there are nine scenes altogether—acquire a scrap-book effect. Talkers are assembled for their necessary dialogues and the company is then quickly reshuffled that another group or pair may talk.

Mr. STEPHEN MURRAY as *Helmy* has the most difficult part and gives a very good performance of a not very clever, very earnest young German. *Erich* and *Otto* are simpler types, and *Erich* personifies the more brutal side of the new movement. One of the best characters is *Professor Weissmann*, (Mr. MARK DIGNAM), the father of *Moritz*, a gentle and unworldly old man with considerable quiet humour and much patience. He represents a line along which the authoress might have obtained better results. There are glimpses in the scenes of the *Weissmanns'* poverty which suggest great possibilities left to one side.

The final curtain is excellent in its sudden intensity and completeness, but the play throughout is over-shadowed by the ghost of the play there might have been. D. W.

"CLIMBING" (EMBASSY)

The Victorian father who urged upon his son relentless application to some sober profession as the only golden key to success would have been rudely shocked had he been told that a time was not far off when a prudent parent would be obliged to inform his child that the only guaranteed introduction to a prosperous career was a public display of stamina, the proceeds of which would be in direct proportion to its futility.

It might have been difficult to make him understand that the twin boons of organised advertising and a popular Press would make it infinitely more profitable to a young man to propel a walnut up the Monte Rosa with his nose than to work ten hours a day in an office; and it would have been wiser to keep from him that his great-granddaughter might earn a place in the sun by walking on stilts from London to the sea.

Mr. MARTEN CUMBERLAND, a playwright with a nice sense of irony, has chosen as his hero a dim-witted boy who takes the trunk-road to fortune by climbing a tree in his father's suburban garden and remaining perched in its branches for days on end. He climbs the tree because he has a half-baked poetic notion of getting nearer the clouds; but when cramp finally brings him down (an agony rather too quickly forgotten, I thought) the Press and its advertisers have worked out much more practical ways of putting the exercise to advantage.

His life-story comes first, to be serialised to millions of readers (all, as Mr. CUMBERLAND neatly puts it, duly certified) and composed by a finely imaginative staff-writer. Although reluctant to sanction it, the boy, on being reminded that his family is very hard up, shows unexpected signs of a wit less dim by demanding, and of course getting, a lot more money. From this lesson he never looks back in the succeeding weeks, extracting larger and larger sums from infuriated business-men with an idiotic unconcern until, obsessed by noughts, he babbles in millions to a horrified film-producer.

So far as they go these contacts with commerce are entertaining. The author keeps us uncertain of the exact number of bees inhabiting *Willie's* bonnet and makes the most of the innocent doubts which assail *Willie*, in the *rôle* of a male *Little Audrey*, about the ethics of proclaiming himself in the newspapers an ardent consumer of products of which he has never even heard. Is it lying, he fairly asks, or is it not?



A SWEET TOOTH AND MONEY FOR JAM

Willie Baker . . . . . MR. SKELTON KNAGGS
Andrew S. Heath . . . . MR. AUBREY DEXTER
Mrs. Baker. . . . . MISS KATIE JOHNSON

The play's weakness is in the similarity of the situations, which becomes very evident in the Third Act, and in an over-leisurely emphasis



THE TRUNK ROAD TO SUCCESS

Willie Baker (*off*) . MR. SKELTON KNAGGS

on the domestic background. The father and sister and her young man are good types, but they are given too much space and slow up the action; what we are interested in is *Willie* v. *The Publicity-Men*, and this needs to be dished out to us at the speed of an American farce. Cut, accelerated and given a new inclination in the Third Act, the play would be greatly improved.

There was a refreshing originality about Mr. SKELTON KNAGGS' *Willie* which more than made up for a certain limitation of manner. Miss KATIE JOHNSON gave a sympathetic portrait of a virtuous *Mother* whose integrity was not proof against fat cheques; and the agents of noise and progress were well and forcefully represented. ERIC.

The Whitest Man We Knew

WE had almost forgotten that, like so many of his kind, he was at heart just a bit of an old rake. He looked such an absolutely pukka white man. His clothes did not suggest the smallest attempt to cut a dash with the opposite sex; the angle at which he wore his hat could not conceivably have been described as rakish; his whole bearing was characterised by a stiff and ungainly frigidity. All the time we knew him he never once lifted his hat to anybody, nor did his cheap nasty old pipe ever leave his mouth.

And then, just as if he had been nothing more than a crooner in a dance-band, the sunshine landed on him "outa heavern aberve" and he fell completely. He lost his head, heart, everything—just went clean to pieces. It is in such situations that a man's true character emerges. Sure enough, alas! the rake in him very soon began to show through. Far from being deterred by that, of course the sunshine persevered with redoubled ardour in the task of changing him. And of course he changed beyond recognition. No amount of coldness could have had the slightest effect; but that cheerful undiscouragable warmth was more than he could resist. Perhaps it is a mistake to question the motive too closely in such cases. Some men, we believe, are thus transformed for no better end than to serve as mirrors in which their transformers may admire their own reflected power. That at least was what occurred to us when we surveyed the sunny puddle in which lay a bit of an old rake, a battered bowler and a nasty old pipe—all that remained of our snow-man.

George Dibb and the Dragon

Once upon a time there was a poor fisherman called George Dibb; and one wet Saturday afternoon he put on his bowler-hat and went and sat on the bank of the Bilbury canal near the gas-works, fishing for grayling. He fished there for quite a long time but he didn't catch anything; and this wasn't as surprising as it sounds, because there weren't any grayling in the Bilbury canal and George Dibb wouldn't have known how to catch them if there had been.

Well, while he was sitting there a tall, thin, dreary-looking man came wandering aimlessly down the tow-path and stopped to watch George Dibb for want of anything better to do. "What luck, mate?" he asked after he had been standing there for about five minutes.

"Can't complain," said George Dibb. "I'd been getting some very nice fish just afore you came along. Things is a bit quiet for the moment, though."

"Well," said the tall thin man, "you want to try further up, alongside the main drain. That's where they usually catches 'em."

"Oh, ay?" said George Dibb; and he picked up his rod and his bottle of tea and his fishing-basket (struggling with it a bit so that the thin man would think it was almost too heavy to lift) and went along to start fishing by the main drain. And the tall thin man came with him and leant against the lock gates smoking his pipe while he told George Dibb all about the salmon he had nearly caught at this very spot.

Well, now, I should think it is quite likely that this tall thin man was one of those things you get in bottles—I mean a genie or something of that sort. Because no sooner had George Dibb cast in his line than he found he had got something pretty heavy on the end of it. "There!" said the thin man—"what did I tell yer? It'll be yon salmon, I bet yer it will."

Well, George Dibb didn't know much about fishing, but he did know that the nearest he would ever get to catching a salmon would be to hook up an empty salmon-tin; but he had certainly got something big on the end of his line, and he reeled it in full of excitement.

However, he had just got the rusty old bicycle-frame which he had hooked up to the surface when the line broke and the bicycle-frame disappeared beneath the scum with a faint gurgle.

"My word!" cried the thin man in awe-struck tones. "Did you ever see the like of that afore?"

"What say?" asked George Dibb. "It was a bicycle-frame, wasn't it?"

"Bicycle-frame!" roared the thin man. "A great creature with horns on its head and round flashing eyes! A thing that snorts at you and then bites through your line with teeth like razors! A thing with a monstrous great body twenty feet long if it was an inch, and you say it was a bicycle-frame! Well, have it your own way if you like."

"Why, I didn't really see it properly," said George Dibb apologetically. "But now I come to think of it I expect you are right. Did you notice its great long neck with a horse's mane on it, and the scales on its back like bits of armour-plating?"

"Ah, that's right," said the tall thin man. "And it had a tail with a forked sting in the end of it." And with that he wandered drearily away telling everyone he met of the strange and terrible monster which had just been hooked in the Bilbury canal and which he had seen with his own eyes.

But George Dibb decided that he had now done enough fishing for one day, so he packed up his things and went home to his tea.

"Ho," said Mrs. Dibb when he got back, "so you've been wasting your time on that dirty canal again, have you? No need to tell me what you've caught this time. Eat up your kipper before it gets cold, and be thankful that other folks are better at catching fish than what you are."

But George Dibb was quiet and dignified as he moved slowly to the head of the table. And he sat there waiting for silence before telling his family of the great things he had achieved that afternoon. However, just then there came a knocking at the door and Mrs. Dibb went round to find that a reporter of *The Bilbury Argus* was there saying that he wanted an interview with Mr. George Dibb the famous fisherman.

And there followed a scene which George Dibb had often pictured in his mind but which he had somehow felt would never really happen to him. There he stood at the head of his family, and there was the gentleman from the newspapers shaking him by the hand and telling him that Bilbury was proud of him. The whole town was ringing with the news that he had struggled for two hours with an enormous monster on the banks of the Bilbury canal. And now his picture was wanted for the paper to go with an account of this epic struggle, the like of which had never before been known in Bilbury.



"Where you been?"
"'avin' me 'air cut."
"You know you can't 'ave yer 'air cut in Company's time."
"Well, it grew in Company's time, didn't it?"
"Not all of it."
"Well, I ain't had it all cut off."



"I 'OPE YOU 'RE NOT THINKING OF MENDING 'ER LADYSHIP'S TAPS WITH YOUR 'AT ON, MR. BROWN ?"

So then in measured tones George Dibb began to relate the adventures of this great day. The creature, he said, was not exactly a sea-serpent, nor could it be described as a whale. It certainly wasn't a hippopotamus, and it stood to reason that it couldn't have been an elephant. But it had flashing eyes and horns on its head, a long scaly body and a tail with a sting in the end of it.

"Would it be anything like a dragon?" asked the reporter.

"That's it," said George Dibb. "You've hit it. A dragon it must have been. Now I come to think of it, it had wings as well."

So the reporter took a picture of George Dibb standing there with his family and hurried away. And when the last edition of the evening paper came out there was the picture on the front-page, and with it was the story of how Mr. George Dibb, the well-known Bilbury angler, had made a gallant attempt to land a dragon which had somehow got into the waters of the Bilbury canal.

"Ah," said George Dibb that evening to his family, "let this be a lesson to all of you. Folks say that a chap's wasting his time as goes and fishes in Bilbury canal. Well, let 'em. They won't get no pictures of themselves in the evening paper that way. No. You can't get famous by sitting at home and scoffing at others. It needs a chap as goes out and does things to get that." And even Mrs. Dibb had nothing to say now that George's fishing had got him into print.

And all the next week honours rolled thick and fast on George Dibb. When he got to the works on Monday morning the manager himself called him into his office and asked him to sit down while he told once again the story of the Bilbury dragon. The Bilbury Angling Club invited him to become a member, and he strolled about their grand club-room at the Y.M.C.A. as if he owned the place, giving advice which was heard respectfully by all the best-known anglers in Bilbury. The Working-men's Club asked him to give them a talk on his angling experiences; and every now and then, when someone else fancied he had seen the Bilbury dragon, the reporters would come and ask for George Dibb's opinion. "Ah," he thought to himself, "it's a fine thing being a national hero and no mistake." And he even began to think that if he went on catching monsters they might put up a statue to him in the park when he died; and he decided that it ought to show him in his new serge suit and wearing his bowler-hat.

And next Saturday the word went round that George Dibb was going to fish again in the canal that afternoon. So when he got there he found that quite a big crowd had assembled on both banks of the canal to see if he would hook the monster again. And everyone else who was fishing was made to stop because George Dibb was the only man who was a match for the monster, and the others would only scare it away.

So George Dibb put his rod together and turned up the collar of his coat—because it always rained whenever he started to fish—and set to work. But the people soon found that watching George Dibb catch the monster wasn't as exciting as they had expected, and they gradually began to lose interest and wandered off. But George Dibb went on fishing away with his mind a happy blank.

And then all of a sudden something strange and wonderful happened. There came a tug at his line and he found that there was a creature wriggling and struggling on the end of



"I'LL TAKE THE SPECIAL LUNCH, PLEASE; BUT COULD I CUT OUT THE HORS-D'ŒUVRES AND USE YOUR PHONE INSTEAD?"

it. Well, in his heart of hearts George Dibb had never really expected this to happen; but he knew what it was. The monster had come back. And while he cautiously started to wind in his reel he shouted loudly for the people to come and help him to get it ashore. And they all came running back down both banks of the canal in a state of the wildest excitement.

But when George Dibb had reeled his line in a bit further he found that it wasn't the monster this time but something even stranger. He had caught a real fish—a thin white flabby creature about a foot long. And George Dibb, who had never caught a fish in all his life before, swelled with pride as he flipped it up on to the bank; and then he looked round with a pleased smile of triumph at his audience.

But he found that all of them were now laughing at him and jeering: "Ho! so this is your monster, is it?" cried one, and, "Where's his horns?" asked another. And some said it was all a swindle, and some that George Dibb would have a better chance of finding his monster if they were to chuck him into the canal to look for it.

But George Dibb, stern and dignified, stood there with his fishing-rod in one hand and his flabby fish in the other, and he answered them never a word. And at long last they began to drift away again, so George Dibb was able to make his way home with his catch, followed only by a few small boys who kept shouting to him to make its eyes flash.

And if you go to his house now you will see the flabby fish in a glass case above the mantelpiece. But if ever George Dibb reads in the paper that someone has just flown the Atlantic or swum the Channel or climbed Mount Everest on a motor tricycle, he tells his family that the newspapers are always making a fuss of somebody. But a real man don't try for no publicity; he scorns it. Because why? —the newspapers don't take no notice of the real achievements of this world. And he repeats once again the story of how he captured the flabby fish.

And he always tells his eldest son, 'Enery, not to try to become famous, because fame is nothing but Dead Sea fruit. And 'Enery always says, All right, he won't. H. W. M.

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DEAR MADAM (or SIR),—Have you ever considered what it would mean to you if you were to make full use of the wonderful services available in this unique business house? A glance at the following list (which is by no means exhaustive) will show you how your household and personal problems can be solved, thus giving you time for the manifold other occupations in which you would like to indulge and the social functions which you would so definitely adorn.

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1. You can park your baby in the Infants' Park. (No charge if the child is removed before the Store closes.)

2. Your flat can be redecorated and/or refurnished in one day during your absence.

3. You can make yourself up at any time in the day (or spend all day doing so) in any of the one-hundred-and-fifty Boudoirs in the Store.

(Rouge, powder, lip-stick, eye-shadow and nail-enamel supplied free.)

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2. Ditto bridge or poker.
3. The swimming-pool is free to customers spending half-a-crown or upwards in the Store.
4. Always in attendance: tactful assistants of either sex who will go to tea with your mother-in-law or other objectionable relatives and explain your absence. (Success guaranteed in this service. *See* letters from gratified clients on view in the department.)

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1. Your favourite pipe can be cleaned, your umbrella rolled, your initials can be put in anyone's hat, whilst you wait.
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1. Cook the dinner.
2. Give a slimming treatment. (This is a new process, known only to our experts sent by us to New York to be trained. Two to six pounds of ugly fat can be removed by one treatment.)
3. Play with the children.
4. Buy your cast-off clothes. (We regret we cannot give anything for gardening suits or dresses.)
5. Tell your fortune by cards or the crystal.
6. Perm your hair.
7. Make a fourth at bridge.

To Gentlemen.

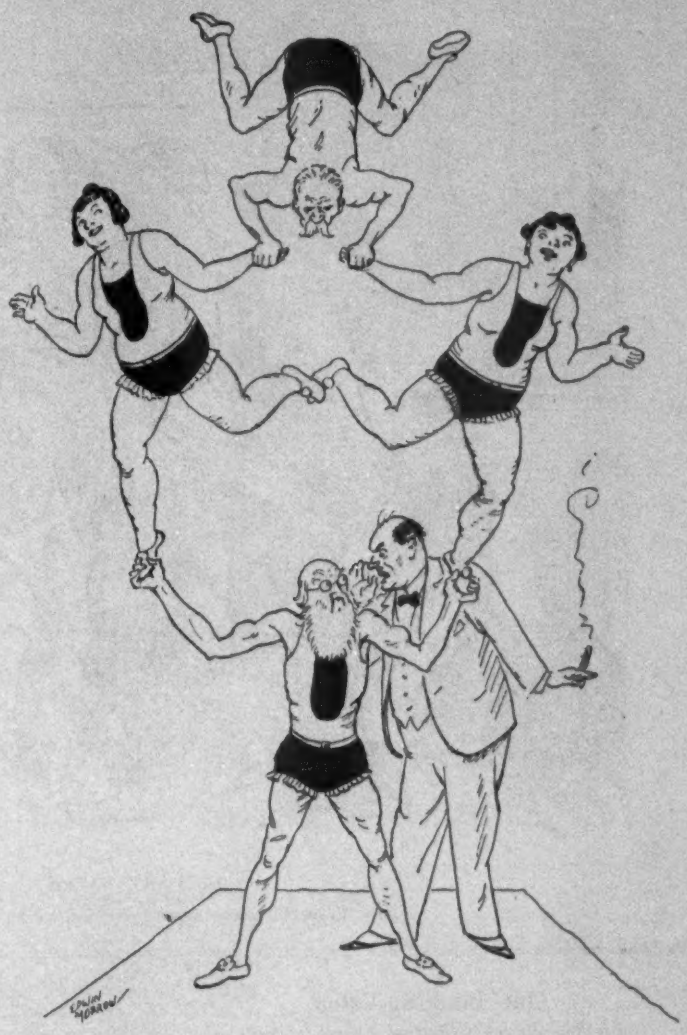
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"FORTY-FIVE YEARS AGO THIS TURN *might* HAVE BEEN ALL RIGHT."
"WELL, IT HAS TAKEN US FORTY-FIVE YEARS TO LEARN IT."



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(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks.)

The Sub-Man of Destiny

KING GEORGE III. was accustomed to dine at two o'clock, his Queen two hours later. Her only distinction, says Mr. C. E. VULLIAMY in *Royal George* (CAPE, 12/6), consisted in being the most inconspicuous of all the Queens of England. He, on the other hand, takes high marks for obstinacy, thick-wittedness and a more than Victorian propriety. He could not conceive that any honest man should disagree with a king, and he succeeded for a time in establishing a dictatorship on a basis of Parliamentary corruption and Courtly obedience. He expected his ministers to bend events to his liking, and had an endearing habit of going off his head in order to compel the universe to fall into line. He was known to conduct the singing in St. George's Chapel with a rolled-up paper, rapping the inattentive on the head with his improvised baton; and he occupied for sixty years a throne gravely shaken by the pinchbeck hero, WILKES, but quite undisturbed by the activities of NAPOLEON. This was the man who, marching towards his destiny in piety, courage, decorum, parsimony, honest conviction and a most lordly ignorance, was fated to divide British from Americans, perhaps for ever. His story is well told in this volume.

Foolscaps for Novelists

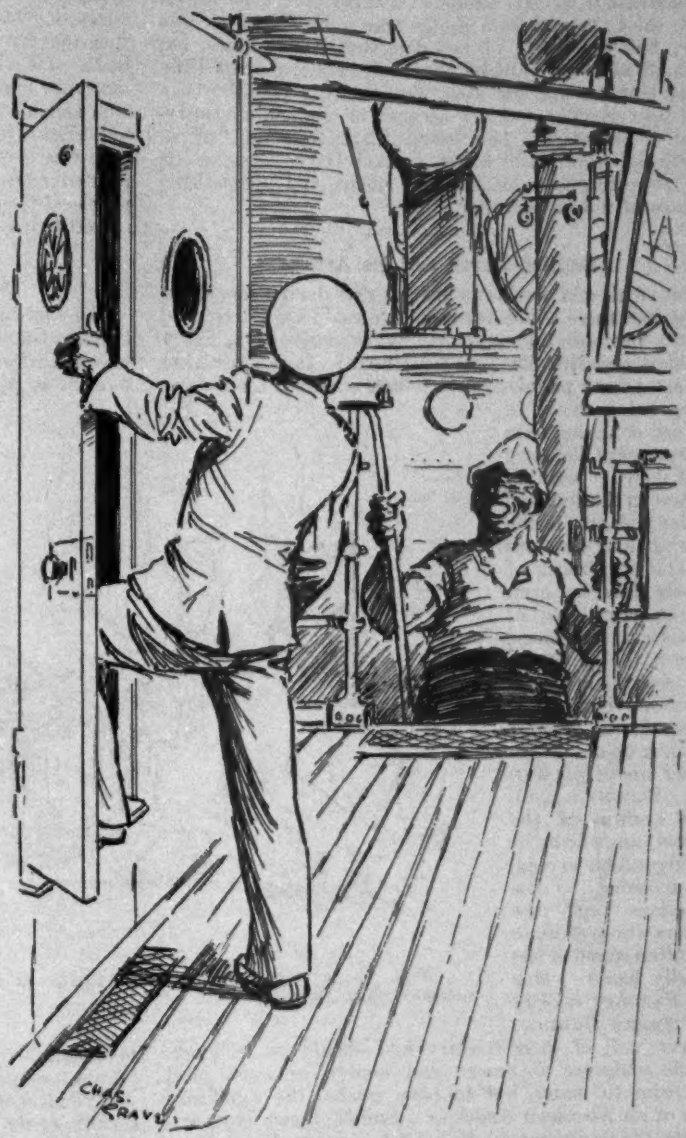
With literary research, taking it all round, the sport is usually greater than the bag. But, though Professor SHEPPERSON of Virginia University has obviously enjoyed stalking burlesque novels, he has brought back a larger collection of trophies than the inexpert would have thought possible. As soon as the English novel got going it invited both parody and satire: either on the ground of its absurd view of life or its specious morality, or both. *Pamela* asked for *Syrena Tricksey* and *Shamela*, just as *Robert Elsmere* cried out for *Bob Sillimere*. Between these limits *The Novel in Motley* (OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS, 12/6) flourished, though, with the exception of *Joseph Andrews* and *Northanger Abbey*—both of which merge satire in realism—there is nothing of salient merit until we get to THACKERAY. THACKERAY is the master craftsman, for PEACOCK burlesques the romantic movement in general rather than any novel in particular. The BRONTË, DISRAELI and DUMAS of BRET HARTE'S *Condensed Novels* are still, however, worth revisiting. Mr. Punch of course played an eminent part in the movement, though it is sad now to think that he saved the touchy DICKENS from being caricatured by THACKERAY.

Satire too Sane

Mr. IVOR BROWN has often shown himself deft to ridicule the foibles of his fellows. In *Master Sanguine* particularly there was some excellent satire of the larger lunacies of our time; but in *The Great and the Goods* (HAMILTON, 7/6) he has been less happily inspired. The scheme of the thing is promising enough, and the introductory portrait of *Edgar Strongitharm Chirrup*, founder and principal of the College of Triumphant Living, is a pretty piece of caricature. But when we come to the ensuing pages culled from the case-book of that egregious charlatan we suffer a sense of disappointment. These studies of the fraudulent or the fatuous assisted to power or affluence over the stepping-stones of human gullibility lack both the *brio* and the preposterous plausibility essential to the *genre*. Mr. BROWN seems temporarily to have lost his touch; his squibs are damp, his scalpel needs the hone. There are occasional felicities but they are too few and too far between. Perhaps the chosen matter proved after all insufficiently stimulating; but another reason suggests itself for this lapse of an accomplished entertainer. Mr. BROWN pokes legitimate fun at the hearty fellows who find their inspiration in the pewter pots of Sussex; but the sturdy fellow with No Nonsense about him is also vulnerable. Mr. BROWN has so sedulously cultivated his sanity that his humour has grown muscle-bound.

Short Stories

I read the twenty-one short and long-short stories in *A Case of Conscience* (GOLLANCZ, 7/6) at a sitting—or sitting-and-a-quarter—without any sense of boredom or that flat feeling of having been sold yet once again which the mere manufacturers of this kind of merchandise, working to formula, so readily induce. It is in general too severe a test to apply, and if Mr. MARTIN ARMSTRONG passes it with honour it is not only because he most skilfully varies his matter and moods—grave, flippant, bizarre, satirical, analytical and humorous by turns—but because he is so much more interested in character than incident and in the form and pattern rather than the content of his sketches. The love-stories, if they can be fitly so called, resolutely avoid sentimentality, indeed are flavoured perhaps with a suspicion of misogyny—which is not to say that he cannot trounce the fatuous or pretentious male when so minded. In two of his stories he permits himself to cock an effective snook at the newest art pranks, thereby risking the reputation of a man lacking in the higher perspicacity. I don't think he quite solves the problem of the abandoned end of the rope in the climbing tragedy, but I have caught him out in no other point of detail.



"EVERYTHING CLEAN ON DECK, BOSUN?"
"YESSIR, EVLYTHING CLEAN, NO. 1 FASHION, SPLINK AND SPANK ALLSAME BLITISH NAVY."

An Englishwoman in Egypt

Daughter of a blue-stocking, to whom BENTHAM left a lock of his hair, and a lawyer so given to diffidence and indigestion that his great abilities did little for his family, *Lucie Duff Gordon* (MURRAY, 12/6) devised such original variations on the theme of Victorian womanhood that her life seems to link the eighteenth century with our own At thirteen she was preoccupied with the religion her radical parents ignored; at sixteen she urged the superiority of NOAH'S animals to the school crocodile on the ground that "*they* went male and female." When her married life was shattered by consumption her unworldliness and originality strengthened and animated the nomadic existence so ably

reconstructed by Mr. GORDON WATERFIELD. Her letters from the Cape and from Egypt were published in her own day; but the death of her daughter, JANET ROSS, has released new and valuable material. For five years Lady DUFF GORDON and her maid were the only Englishwomen in Upper Egypt; and her account of the fellow-countrymen described by her friend THACKERAY as "pluck, manliness, enterprise, bitter ale and Harvey's sauce" is an interesting pendant to her unique and sympathetic picture of native conditions.

English Earth and Its Artists

Fat stock and fertilisers are not everybody's fancy, but "breathes there a man with soul so dead" as not to respond to the pastoral tale unfolded by Professor J. A. SCOTT WATSON and Mrs. MAY ELLIOT HOBBS? It is a record of facts, set forth plainly and with little adornment, but those facts, being rooted in the soil or arising from the springs of life, have their own essential poetry. In the drainage of the fenlands, in the clearing and sweetening and enrichment of moorland wastes, even in the inventions of agricultural machinery, there is the quality of epic, and the men who did those things were visionaries as well as philanthropists. These *Great Farmers* (SELWYN AND BLOUNT, 12/6), little known to the general, are worthy of the larger fame so readily accorded to the politicians and the soldiers whose claim to it is often so much less soundly based. Men like BARCLAY of Ury and HENRY DUDDING deserve well of their country and should be its glory. In the sculpture of bronze and marble we must yield the palm to many, but to have created the significant form of an Aberdeen Angus or a Suffolk Punch is no immemorable achievement. When Greece boasts her PHIDIAS or Italy her DONATELLO, let us proudly retort with ROBERT BAKEWELL or AMOS CRUICKSHANK. Nor let us weakly relinquish the heritage of their great art.



Wife. "I DO WISH YOU COULD PUT THINGS IN THE WASTE-PAPER BASKET *TIDILY*, GEORGE!"

Boarding-House Background

Miss AUDREY LUCAS, by sending a young novelist-hero to acquire copy in a boarding-house, has managed to write a novel about people who live in boarding-houses herself without looking quite as though she was doing it. *Life Class* (COLLINS, 7/6) justifies her choice, though her approach hardly need have been so oblique except that *Mathew's* charming sister and mother and their garden near Chertsey offer a good contrast to "Glen Erin," near the British Museum, and its inhabitants. They, however, are all well drawn and alive save the one who might have been most interesting of all—*John Howard*, a doctor struck off the Register after a divorce case, who now runs the boarding-house. *John*, though everything said about him is interesting, never materialises as do his plump common darling of a wife and his anxiously snobbish daughter. The modern indifference to old-fashioned morality is fairly general in both Chertsey and Bloomsbury, but it would be a hard-hearted reader who did not find most of Miss LUCAS's people in their different ways and degrees likeable nor his attention arrested by their histories.

Craftsmanship in Criminality

The view may be heterodox, but I am inclined to think that Mr. GILBERT FRANKAU, that accomplished storyteller, tells a short story better than a long one. By the straiter form he is guarded against that tendency to redundancy which is the besetting danger of his fertility. His *Experiments in Crime* (HUTCHINSON, 7/6) at any rate make easy and never wearisome reading. If they do not deeply engage our human sympathies, that perhaps is no disadvantage where violent death plays so frequent a part. What most prominently characterises these stories—apart from the apparent familiarity with which their author moves among desperate men and along devious ways—is the ingenuity both of the criminals and of those who foil them or bring them to justice. It is difficult to know which the more to admire, and, while one must rejoice that wrongdoing meets its due reward, one can hardly refrain from murmuring "Hard luck!" when a not-too-repulsive blackmailer is improbably bluffed by a male impersonator, or the Cosmopolitan Fence, having baffled Scotland Yard and the Sûreté, is tripped up by the casual intelligence of a schoolboy. Mr. FRANKAU obviously shares that amiable weakness, but he is essentially on the side of the angels; and while there is some rather shady work even in the "other stories" which make up his volume, it is always *pour le bon motif* and in the service of honour or romance.

The Army Owns Up

"Reference para. 58 sub-para. (b) line 4, delete 'intellect.'"
Official Note of alterations in Army Recruiting Regulations.

"It is officially announced at Tokio, states a Reuter message, that Prince Chichibu, the younger brother of the Emperor Hirohito, is being sent to London to attend the Coronation of King George IV. as the Emperor's proxy."—*Lancashire Paper.*

There's a surprise in store for *him*.

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Charivaria

A WELL-KNOWN chess-player has been appointed a Chairman of Directors. Anyway, he'll know how to keep his eye on the board.

* * *

"The holes in Gruyère cheese should not be too big," says an expert. If they are, then it's mice.

* * *

The City is taking a great interest in theatrical affairs, according to a newspaper. So there may be some truth in the rumour that Mr. COCHRAN is joining the Worshipful Company of Spectacle Makers.

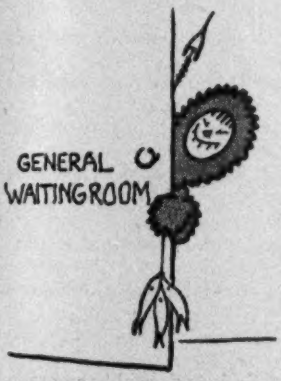


* * *

An umbrella that folds up has been invented. As yet, however, few restaurants seem to stock it.

* * *

"Roman warriors often received property for brave deeds," asserts a writer. For example, Horatius kept the bridge.



* * *

We are told that every big railway-station now has its own refrigerators. We are not told, however, why so many of them have "General Waiting Room" written on the door.

* * *

According to a biographer, Signor MUSSOLINI was not particularly good at arithmetic during his schooldays. Nothing is said about dictation.

* * *

A bill-poster recently made a clever capture of a smash-and-grab thief. Apparently he threatened the man with a thorough pasting.

* * *

Now that the issues of the Spanish civil war are clearly no longer of direct concern to their Governments, applications to join the Non-Intervention Committee are daily expected from General FRANCO and Señor LARGO CABALLERO.



Unrest is spreading in the United States. There are now rumours of a stand-up strike of sedentary workers.

* * *

Chorus-girls of a New York production were presented with a huge iced cake by an anonymous admirer. The top, we hope, was decorated with sugar daddies.

* * *

A well-known lion-tamer recently said that he would rather be eaten by his lions than die in any other way—"Pleased to have you gnaw me," in fact.

* * *

Among recent publications is a book containing amusing sayings of children. No child with ambitions can afford to be without it.



* * *

A cashier attached to an American newspaper has been imprisoned for falsifying the accounts. As the sub-editors pointed out, that was their business.

* * *

Now that every effort is being made to keep influenza germs off tramcars and omnibuses, it is said that many of them are learning to ride bicycles.

* * *

Just now, says a naturalist, it is very interesting to watch the birds taking advantage of the mild winter to make love to one another in the garden. Interesting maybe, but not frightfully sporting.

* * *

An Australian meteorologist claims that he can predict the weather several days ahead with absolute accuracy. It is rumoured that he may be attached to DON BRADMAN as twelfth man.

* * *

A junior clerk working late surprised some burglars in a City office. He would have amazed his employer.

Bulger on Peace

My friend Bulger says that this country is in the middle of a crisis worse than any it has faced since 1918. I didn't realise this until Bulger explained it to me, which only goes to prove that it takes a brainy man like Bulger to understand a crisis. It seems that there is a grave danger of peace becoming general.

There are only two small wars going on just now—one in Spain and the other in China; and Bulger says that subversive influences are at work to stop both of them. If that happens there won't be any wars going on anywhere—a state of affairs without a precedent and, as Bulger pointed out, a very dangerous thing. For wars, after all, are quite natural. There has always been a war somewhere, and if the world is left without one for the first time in history, nobody knows what will happen. People will be living in an unnatural state, and when people are living in an unnatural state something terrible is bound to occur. All this talk of universal peace is just meddling with human nature, and who knows whether human nature will stand for it? Our ancestors always had wars, and they must have had a very good reason for the practice, so why should a lot of ignorant busybodies be allowed to abolish something that has been established for so long?

Moreover, as Bulger says, people who attack war are cowardly, for war is very delicate. It takes a lot of coaxing and cajoling. There were many moments during the years 1914–1918 when both sides were in danger of declaring peace, and if the men of affairs who were responsible for these things had closed their eyes for a moment the worst might have happened. In those days peace was scarcely respectable, but if the two little wars now current are stifled things will become much more difficult. Remember that prevention is easier than cure, and if peace once gets a firm grip on us the cost of getting rid of it will be immense. If this happens Bulger estimates that the country will have to spend more money on propaganda to start the next war than the last one cost altogether. That shows how desperate the situation has become.

Bulger says that the trouble is that, although the Government is not opposed to war in principle, it refuses to have anything to do with a war except in defence of the country's interests. The Opposition, on the other hand, is ready to take part in anybody's war but is pacifist in principle. So what are we to make of it? If only the Government would recognise the power of the popular Press and would allow it to organize intervention on both sides in the Spanish war, something might be done. But instead of this the Government has weakly forbidden even volunteers to leave for Spain, an insolent procedure when one remembers that *Hansard* has a circulation of only a few thousand, carries no National Advertising and does not even offer free insurance to its readers.

This shows us the futility of democracy. There is too much free speech and not enough free fight, and the result is the perilous situation in which the world is now placed. Bulger thinks that there is no hope for civilisation unless Europe decides to intervene in China before anyone has learnt the language. Then the politicians won't be able to interfere.



"Do please be early with your Coronation copy, Mr. Hake—we want it to be something in the nature of a scoop."

I Saw——

I closed my sight in a shocked amaze; I opened my eyes anew;
I will not say where I saw this thing, you can take my word it's true;
And I turned away and said to myself in an awestruck murmur, "Cripes,
I saw four bishops playing slosh, and all of them smoking pipes."

Much have I travelled and heard strange lore in the lands of the Eastern kings;
Tars, I'm told, have miraculous tales for those who believe such things;
There are tall yarns told of current events 'neath the prodigal Stars and Stripes,
But not four bishops unbent at slosh and affably smoking pipes.

Had I the power of the bards of old, still read I believe by some,
I could make no doubt a remarkable ode, presuming the words would come;
My name would leap to the public eye, set up in the boldest types,
From four grave prelates engaged at slosh, and smoking, like laymen, pipes.

But much may be done, with a touch of luck, by a single golden line,
And where, I ask, in the realm of song will you hit upon one like mine?
This marvellous line, this musical line, a line that sears and gripes:
I saw four bishops playing slosh, and all of them smoking pipes.

Dum-Dum.



THE FLYING FACTORY

"HEY! THA NEEDN'T LOOK ANY FURTHER, LADS, THIS IS A CHAMPION SPOT."

[The aeroplane factory which was to have been built near Maidenhead is now, it seems, to find a home in Lancashire.]



"GIT A MOVE ON, CAN'T YER? LOOK AT THE TRAFFIC YER 'OLDING UP."

Doggerel's Dictionary

I BEGIN to be a good deal bothered by all I have to do on behalf of my friend Elkin Doggerel, the poet, who is still away. It is no joke being the literary executor of a man who isn't even dead. When I took on the job I did it cheerfully enough; I thought it would be a simple matter of publishing a few odd scattered manuscripts I might find in his flat. I didn't expect them to be so odd, or so scattered, or so numerous, or so much nibbled by mice; nor, let me add, did I expect to have to put new washers on all the taps and remove a hundred-and-six empty whisky-bottles before being able to get at the fuse-box.

That, however, by the way. The trouble now is that, since I was ill-advised enough to ask him (in these pages a few months ago) to communicate with me, he has been communicating with me; mostly by telegram, and nearly every time from a different address. Apart from a dozen or so dealing with the reform of the House of Lords, a subject which seemed to worry him for about a week at the beginning of last month, the telegrams have all dealt with some manuscript he wishes me to find and publish. I was a little puzzled the other day, though, to get a wire reading: PUBLISH MY DICTIONARY—DOGGEREL. I looked conscientiously through all the bookshelves in the flat and wired in return: ORD CONCISE OXFORD SHORTER OXFORD HARRAPS CHAMBERS OR IMPERIAL 1884 AND WHAT DO YOU MEAN ANYWAY THEYRE ALL PUBLISHED ALREADY. This drew the immediate response: SAP I DONT MEAN THOSE I MEAN QUOTE MY DICTIONARY UNQUOTE REMEMBER BYRONS RAVENNA JOURNAL.

By this I was completely baffled. I wired: BYRONS RAVENNA JOURNAL QUERY, and my impetuous friend replied: YOU HEARD STOP BYRONS RAVENNA JOURNAL STOP LEAVING HERE IMMEDIATELY UNKNOWN DESTINATION.

This was his usual way of saying, "This correspondence must now cease" and leaving me to hold the fort, or the baby.

To the best of my belief I have now discovered what he meant. At Ravenna between May 1821 and May 1822 Lord BYRON wrote a sort of journal or commonplace book. He began it under the heading "My Dictionary," with entries about "Augustus" and "Aberdeen," after which he stopped bothering about alphabetical order. Assuming that Elkin Doggerel meant he had written something of the same kind, I diligently searched the flat and was at last rewarded (if you can call it that) by finding a small pack of manuscript under one leg of a tripod from which was suspended a hatbox full of those burrs he throws at people. The manuscript has the words "MY DICTIONARY" on the title-page, and it seems obvious to me that for some reason or other he now wants it published. Very well, then. Begin reading here.

DOGGEREL'S DICTIONARY

ANECDOTES.—I remember the point and forget the details, just like a very large number of other people. Take, for instance, that celebrated story which deals, I have a shrewd suspicion, with BISMARCK, VON MOLTKE and a cigar. I first heard this story many years ago and I have

never remembered it since. I don't remember it now. The only character I am quite sure of is the cigar; but call the other two Y and Z and I can outline the story. During a battle—I forget that too: call it X—during the battle of X, Y rode up to Z and asked how things were going. Z took out a cigar and lit it, ". . . and then," said Y, telling the story afterwards, "I knew we were all right." Well, there you have all you really need of the story. It should be plain to you that I am certain about the identity of the most important character: that anecdote would be nowhere without the cigar. (I should be nowhere without one too if I could afford it.)

On the other hand there is a substratum of anecdotes of which I remember the details and forget the point. Of this kind is the one about Mr. GLADSTONE and JOHN BRIGHT in which JOHN BRIGHT, with a hearty laugh, made to Mr. GLADSTONE some remark about the Corn Laws. What it was I don't know. Probably it was pretty good.

These two classes include between them a very large part of the anecdotal furniture of my mind. Half-remembered and half-baked as many of these stories are, I must say I have more affection for them than I have for most of those I remember in all their stark detail, which mostly concern Irishmen, Scotsmen, Jews, Americans or somebody's uncle. The people I tell them to are not competent to judge, because they are always concentrating on the thought of a story to tell me when I have finished. If they ever heard what I said, though, I think they'd agree.

ANNIVERSARIES.—These have always impressed me for some reason. I like to think that TENNYSON died on the eighth anniversary of the opening of the Inner Circle, and that on the twenty-fourth anniversary of the death of General ROBERT E. LEE the Lord Mayor of MANCHESTER opened Thirlmere Waterworks. I admit I like to think of these things because of their indirect associations rather than their direct ones. I don't know whether TENNYSON ever travelled on the Inner Circle, but it isn't impossible. Nor is it impossible that the Lord Mayor of MANCHESTER was thinking about General ROBERT E. LEE while he was opening Thirlmere Waterworks. But I like to bring in the additional possibility that he was also thinking about General ULYSSES S. GRANT, and that perhaps somebody in the audience was wondering how to pronounce Appomattox. That would be a coincidence, however, not an anniversary; and if it comes to coincidence, *see* COINCIDENCES, next letter but one.

(That is all we have room for at the moment. And before I publish the rest of the manuscript, anyway, I shall have to find another place for the tripod and burrs. It will probably end in my having to throw one of them away—either the tripod, or the burrs, or the manuscript.) R. M.



"DID YOU?"

Please, Mr. Fahrenheit!

I FAIL to follow, I'm afraid,
Why you cold-shouldered Centigrade,
Which freezes (as it ought) at nought
And boils at just a hundred.
Please tell me, Mr. FAHRENHEIT,
Why this was not considered right,
For often, as I strain my brain,
I've rather sadly wondered.

Your figures, Sir, are such a bore
That when I think of you
I lose my 98·4
And start to 212. M. H.

Waste Not, Want Not

"To taking up floor to find rat and replacing same, 3*s.* 6*d.*"
Contractor's Invoice.

"One comment is: 'When he opens his sealed lips he adds to his gungle.'"—*Indian Paper.*
Is that a good thing to do?

The Long View

How one envies the people who have Done Things! What admiration is aroused in the breast by the men who have Been There! Do they realise, those who talk lightly about the Coromandel Coast or cast their South Sea Island pearls before us stay-at-home swine, exactly what emotions are inspired in us who listen? Probably not, or they wouldn't do it. "A man who has not been in Italy," said the good Doctor (JOHNSON rather than *Watson*), "is always conscious of an inferiority." If he had said Honolulu or Madagascar he would have been nearer the mark. There is nothing very dashing about going to Italy. Nor perhaps about going to Honolulu—but I know what I mean.

Some correspondence has been going on in *The Sunday Times* about the (terrestrial) distance it is possible to see with the naked eye, and the casual references in some of the letters to the far corners of the earth have been enough to reduce the ordinary "Well, I once went to Boulogne" reader to a state of inferiority bordering on non-existence. "Some forty years ago, on my first visit to Darjeeling . . ." begins one correspondent. You note that "first"? And the calm assumption of the whole thing that visits to Darjeeling are as common as trips to Burnham Beeches? Not an effort to lighten the blow by explaining that "As an officer of the 14th Hydan Sikhs, I was lucky enough some forty years ago to be stationed at Darjeeling," or that "Owing to the munificence of an aunt I was enabled at an early age to sample the delights of foreign travel." No, just a bare humiliating reference to "my first visit to Darjeeling."

But it was another letter which really moved me.

"SIR (it began),—Before the War I was living on the nitrate pampa of Tocopilla, Chile."

Of course I can see that to some people there is nothing remarkable about that at all. Those who have actually lived on the nitrate pampa of Tocopilla, Chile, must find it no more surprising than the statement that before the War I lived at Number 18, Wellington Avenue, Pinner. Indeed, if anything, rather less. But to one who has *not* lived on the nitrate pampa of Tocopilla, Chile—who has, if the truth be told, no very clear idea what a nitrate pampa is, the remark comes like a blow in the face, a deliberate insult, a stab in the very vitals.

When I had read the letter and absorbed the details that the Andes were visible ninety miles away and that the sunshine could be seen reflected in the windows of trains on the Antofagasta-Bolivia Railway at a distance of eighty miles, I took a sudden resolution. I will not, I said to myself, be put upon, and I rang loudly for pens, ink and paper.

"Sir," said my obsequious manservant, "they are already before you on your desk."

"So they are," I said. "Then you may leave me." And in a clear bold hand I wrote the following letter to the Editor of *The Sunday Times*:—

SIR,—In the summer of 1882 I was smoking a pipe on the Siberian tundra. My wife was knitting in the Hindu Kush and, by a curious coincidence, my brother-in-law was burning rubbish in the Western Ghats. We all distinctly saw the Taj Mahal by moonlight. Of course, owing to the curvature of the earth, it looked quite flat.

Once, on a very clear day, I saw Wrangel Island from Yokohama, but didn't think much of it.

My letter was not printed, so I wrote again:—

SIR,—When I was sitting on a peak in Darien, many years ago now, I caught a distinct glimpse of the Pacific, as, to judge from their expressions, did all my men. My eyes, it is only right to add, are particularly keen, having as a matter of fact been compared not unfavourably with those of the eagle.

I wonder if any of your readers has had a similar experience?

This letter, which I signed "CORTEZ," was again not printed, apparently under the impression that it was some kind of hoax.

My third letter, which, to save time, I did not trouble to post, ran as follows:—

SIR,—About fifty years ago I was squatting on the sulphate savannah of Central America, waiting for death. The dreaded tubutubu fever of the Matto Grosso had laid its hold upon me. Longingly, as the sun rose higher and higher, I thought of the potash plateau of Tibet, the cool sodium swamps of Trichinopoly, India. "Oh," I muttered, half in delirium, "to be in the saltpetre pans of Bechuanaland!" Then suddenly, as I gazed eastwards over the illimitable plains I saw it—what appeared to be a faint smudge on the horizon. Knowing that there was not a mountain or hill of any sort between ourselves and the Atlantic, I turned in amazement to my companion.

"Look!" I whispered. "That faint smudge on the horizon. Do you think—is it possible that we are looking at the peak of Kilima Njaro, five thousand miles away?"

"No," he answered with a laugh—"that is the Editor of *The Sunday Times*, out for a stroll."

And so it was.

I am now going to sit on the mahogany benches of the Embankment, London.

H. F. E.



"I REPEAT, ADOLPH, I WILL NOT HAVE YOU DROPPING YOUR CIGARETTE-ENDS INTO THE ORNAMENTS."



SUNDAY BRIDGE

"Do you mind if we have the Archbishop during this rubber?"

My Great-Aunt Sophonisba

My great-aunt Sophonisba
When she was sixty-nine
She came across a recipe
For elderberry wine;
In lilac-coloured ink it was,
And written in a book
Cook's great-grandmamma
Had handed down to Cook.
"Toorelay! Toorelay!" Aunt Sophonisba said.
(The recipe, I am afraid,
Had mounted to her head.)
She pinned her hat on hastily—
A floppy one, with flowers—
And no one saw my aunt again
For hours and hours and hours,
Till we found her singing happily
As only great-aunts can,
And boiling elderberries in
A brass preserving-pan.

She boiled the stuff and stirred it,
She ladled off the scum,
She added cloves and sugar
And a drachm of capsicum;
She strained it through a muslin cap
She used to wear at school,
And bottled it and corked it
Before the wine was cool!
Toorelay! Toorelay!
She corked it good and tight,
And ev'ry bottle, *Plop!* and *Plup!*
Blew up that very night.
This was but the beginning
Of her criminal career;
Next day we found her simply drenched
In foaming ginger-beer.
She brewed a pancheon of rum punch,
A firkin of sloe gin;
Intoxicated (by success)
She made some metheglin.
Cook sampled it with parsnip wine—
It cauterized her tongue!
(The firkin, very luckily,
My aunt forgot to bung.)

But going on from strength to strength,
Inebriate indeed—
Toorelay! Toorelay!—
She brewed a tun of mead.
The cook had fled, the parlourmaid,
The butler was in bed
(A cask of greengage brandy O
Had burst about his head).
But did this household crisis daunt
Aunt Sophonisba? No!
With cinnamon and tansy
And a pansy-leaf or so
She flavoured gins and neguses
Until beyond the pale
She stepped by adding peppermint
To mangold-wurzel ale.
Then up and snorted grandpapa:
"I've stood about enough;
Your misdirected energy
Must change its outlet, Soph!"
And all the family backed him up.
(It was a lovely row!)
Toorelay! Toorelay!
She runs a Milk Bar now. R. C. S.

At the Pictures

Recruiting and Vienna Yet Again

To the ingenious people who, in spite of its being War Office propaganda, have succeeded in making *O.H.M.S.* deliver a story, great praise is due. Primarily of course the picture is intended to help recruiting; but even if the eligible do not hasten to claim the King's shilling, they are entertained, and even amused, since the raw material which discipline moulds and kneads into a soldier is not that of the ordinary British youth, but of an American crook fleeing to England, who pretends to be a Canadian and is a very good comedian all the while—no other, in fact, than Wallace Ford. In his early rebellious days, before the machine has tamed him, he is very funny indeed.

In the course of an hour-and-a-half *O.H.M.S.* does very cheerfully all that is expected of it; and does indeed more, for the name of Tommy Atkins is never mentioned. There are scenes in barracks; there is a review; there is a pretty girl over whom two suitors can quarrel; there is a farewell concert; there is a troop-ship and, on foreign



Jimmy Tracy (Wallace Ford). "By the right, pick it up—pick it up!"

service in China, there is a skirmish in which an enormous amount of shots are exchanged. The hero—quite unnecessarily, I thought—is killed; but this, perhaps, is in order that without further trouble the pretty girl might get the other man.

There was a time when we thought or even hoped that Hollywood would forget Vienna; but, faced by the



PROFESSOR OF GUM CHEWING

Elsa Strauss . . . . Gladys Swarthout
Buzzy Bellew . . . Fred MacMurray

poverty or exhaustion of other themes nearer home, she has gone there again, as the title of one of the latest films, *Champagne Waltz*, practically avers. For the "Champagne Waltz" turns out to be "The Blue Danube," and, as in a vision, we actually see it played and danced for the benefit and instruction of an American jazz conductor, with the Emperor Franz Josef in a box at one end of the ball-room and Strauss with his band at the other—both triumphs of the wig-maker's craft. But the jazz-band conductor (Fred MacMurray) is only partially convinced that the music is better than his, and the story incredibly ends in a mixed version of the old and fairly new, in which "The Blue Danube" is rendered half as Strauss wrote it and half as saxophones deal with it, while the heroine, who purports to be Strauss's great-granddaughter but is really Gladys Swarthout, sings the vocal version.

This summary, though brief, will inform the reader that there is little artistic or technical advance in *Champagne Waltz*. It seems indeed to be one of those pictures that emerge from the presence of a cast, rather than the other, and right, way round. Gladys Swarthout being there, with voice, Fred MacMurray with pleasing leading-man characteristics, Jack Oakie (growing very fat) with merry wise-cracks, and Herman Bing with indignant gurgles, a *pot-pourri* acceptable to easy-going cinema audiences had to result; and some genius suggesting Vienna and "The Blue Danube," the blend was arranged. But it isn't good; and the lessons in gum-chewing which the hero gives the heroine become very tedious.

A better American film, partly because it has a story to tell and sticks to it, is *G-Man's Wife*, where we are again in the familiar atmosphere of Sing-Sing, of escapes from the police, pursuit, six-shooters and (film) death. There is even, just like old times, a motor-car collision in which one vehicle is left in flames. What could be more soothing to the tired man than all this?

But *G-Man's Wife* has certain qualities that make it interesting, not least the personality of the leading figure, Pat O'Brien, who very rightly has been allowed by the authorities to resume his old-time status as a star alone. The best performance in the picture is, however, that of Cesar Romero (what names these actors have!) as *Gene Maroc*, whom he makes consistently sinister and implacable.

"Shorts" are, I know, not very popular among cinema audiences, any more than short stories are among those who keep popular lending-libraries. But I urge everyone who notices in a programme the presence



A MINE OF SUPPRESSED INFORMATION

Waiter . . . . . Ernest Cossart

of *How to Vote*, to see it, because the principal figure is that most acceptable American humorist, Bob Benchley, who, in addition to his books and his regular work as dramatic critic of *The New Yorker* (he is probably the best dramatic critic now writing), has dabbled with the films, and in this brief reel extends the old joke with which he once toured America in person, endeavouring, as he blundered on, to make clear the intricacies of a

Treasurer's report. On the screen, with the aid of a map and a pointer, BOB BENCHLEY now describes the new estate which is to be developed, glossing over the dollars that it will cost—millions—with the exception of 17.50 for a cab-fare; and he does it all with charm, bonhomie and a gift of nonsense that is not only irresistible but that no one would wish to resist.

I was saying something recently about the deterioration, or at any rate the dilution, of WALT DISNEY, who, naturally enough, is having difficulty in finding new themes. In the last of his Silly Symphonies that I have seen, depicting the visit of the country mouse to the town mouse, there was now and then a return to his best manner; but not sufficient sign of it. Meanwhile his rivals, although busy, do not seem to have acquired any of the divine fire. *Popeye the Sailor*, who is the most popular and who, I noticed at Olympia, has received the compliment, like *Mickey*, of being reproduced as a toy, leaves me, I must confess, very cold indeed; and I envy the people—and very numerous they are—who can laugh at him. But laugh they do. As an unknown sage once said so acutely, it takes many different kinds of people to make a world.

E. V. L.

Monday Morning's Mail

I.

DARLING MUM and darling DAD,
How are you? I'm quite all right.
Yesterday we won the match.
Can I have a flying kite?
And I left my skates behind.
Could you spare me one-and-six?
Atkinson has got a bike.
(He can light a fire with sticks.)
We had treacle-tart to-day.
I got E for last week's French,
But I wasn't quite the worst.
Shall I make a garden-bench?
It will take a lot of wood,
But it's better than a box.
Matron says to let you know
That I need some woolly socks.
Meet you Sunday by the gym.
No more news. With love from TIM.

II.

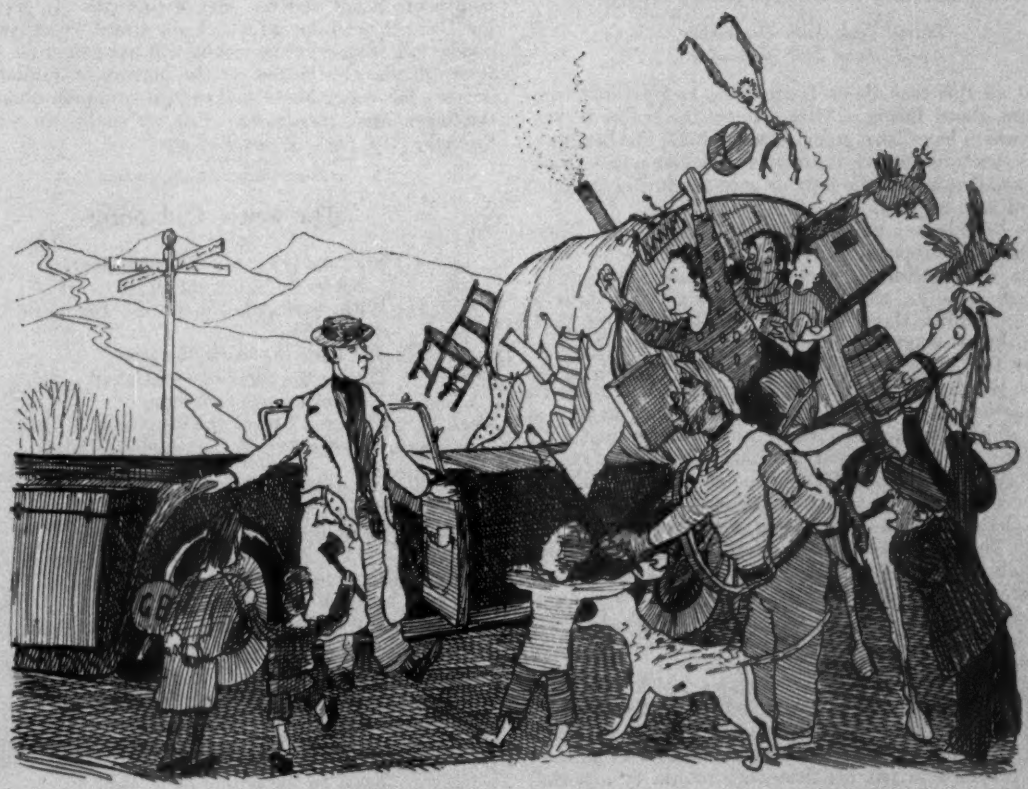
DEAR MADAM, in this mornings *News*
Is your ad. for General-Cook.
I am 40, fond of country,
Seven years with Mrs. Brook.
C. of E. and clean in person,
Honest, sober, fond of dogs.
I can manage any oven.
Ever truely, EMMY BLOGGS.

III.

DEAR MRS. TIPSY, I'm afraid
That I *must* complain once more
About the noise your lovebirds made
This morning, please, *at half-past* four.
And perhaps I'm not offending
When I mention gramophones—
Don't you think that yours wants mending?
Anticipating peace.—JANE JONES.

IV.

Cocktails, duck on Fri. at seven?
Bimbo's flat. It will be heaven.



THE BRITISH CHARACTER

IMPORTANCE OF REMEMBERING THAT ONE IS A GENTLEMAN.

The Scientific Year

One of the jolliest things about the League of Nations is its ability to retain its sense of proportion and not to allow itself to be distracted by the craze of the moment. During the Abyssinian business there were one or two occasions when Article XIII. was thankfully forgotten and the League settled down happily to consideration of immigration in Indo-China or leprosy in Lapland. It is the same with the meeting of the League Council which is now in progress. You might think that all the time would be taken up by deciding whether Ataturk shall have Alexandretta or not, or in working out a formula to ensure that all the Russian, German, Italian and French troops in Spain shall remain strictly neutral. But you'd be wrong, reader, you'd be wrong. These things may be mentioned. They may even be discussed. But one of the *main* things the League Council is going to do on this trip is to consider the Reform of the Calendar.

I have never quite understood this enthusiasm for reforming the calendar. I don't say the calendar is *perfect*; but it always seems to me that there are a lot of other things which need reforming much more. But there it is. Reforming the calendar is like the Channel Tunnel and Proportional Representation and Decimal Coinage. It gets into people's blood; and after that they spend most of the rest of their lives agitating about it.

The difficulty, I understand, is that a year really consists of 365·2422 days, and people want to split that up so that they know where they are without having to mutter—

"Thirty days hath September,
April, June and November . . ."

without all this fuss about Leap Years and without complications about Easter. After a lot of inconclusive arguments, which have been going on since 1582, the League of Nations has now thrown the matter open as a free-for-all, with a small prize for the lady or gent producing the most practical sort of year.

There have been a number of quite gallant shots. There is a Central European gentleman who solves the whole problem by abolishing weeks and months altogether. There are, he says, three-hundred-and-sixty-five days in a year. Number them 1 to 365 and let it go at that. I don't know what he does with the odd ·2422. Presumably lets it accumulate at compound interest. Then there is Mr. H. G. Wells, who advocates four quarters, each consisting of one month of thirty-one days and two of thirty, with one day to spare which just isn't anything. Another similar scheme plumps for twelve thirty-day months with five spare days. In this case, however, the five days are to be Bank Holidays. This seems to be a definite advance on having just one day when one wouldn't know if it were Friday or August. The Russians, with their usual passion for having something entirely original and proletarian, have evolved a special sort of eight-ball over of their own, with twelve months of six weeks of five days each. Once again, the best feature seems to be that the five spare days are Bank Holidays.

I must confess, however, that the idea which I like best is that of a Mr. Cotsworth, who wants thirteen months of twenty-eight days each. It seems to me that Mr. Cotsworth is the only man of the lot who has had a real idea. For he proposes to put his thirteenth month (yclept Sol) between June and July. Now that, I suggest, is talking. It might be very nice to have five more Bank Holidays, but surely, if we could have another whole month between June and July, just in the very best of the summer weather, there would be some *point* in reforming the calendar? You know how it is at present. June's a bit early to get away, and in July everywhere starts to be full of trippers. Sol, quite definitely, is the holiday month I've been looking for.

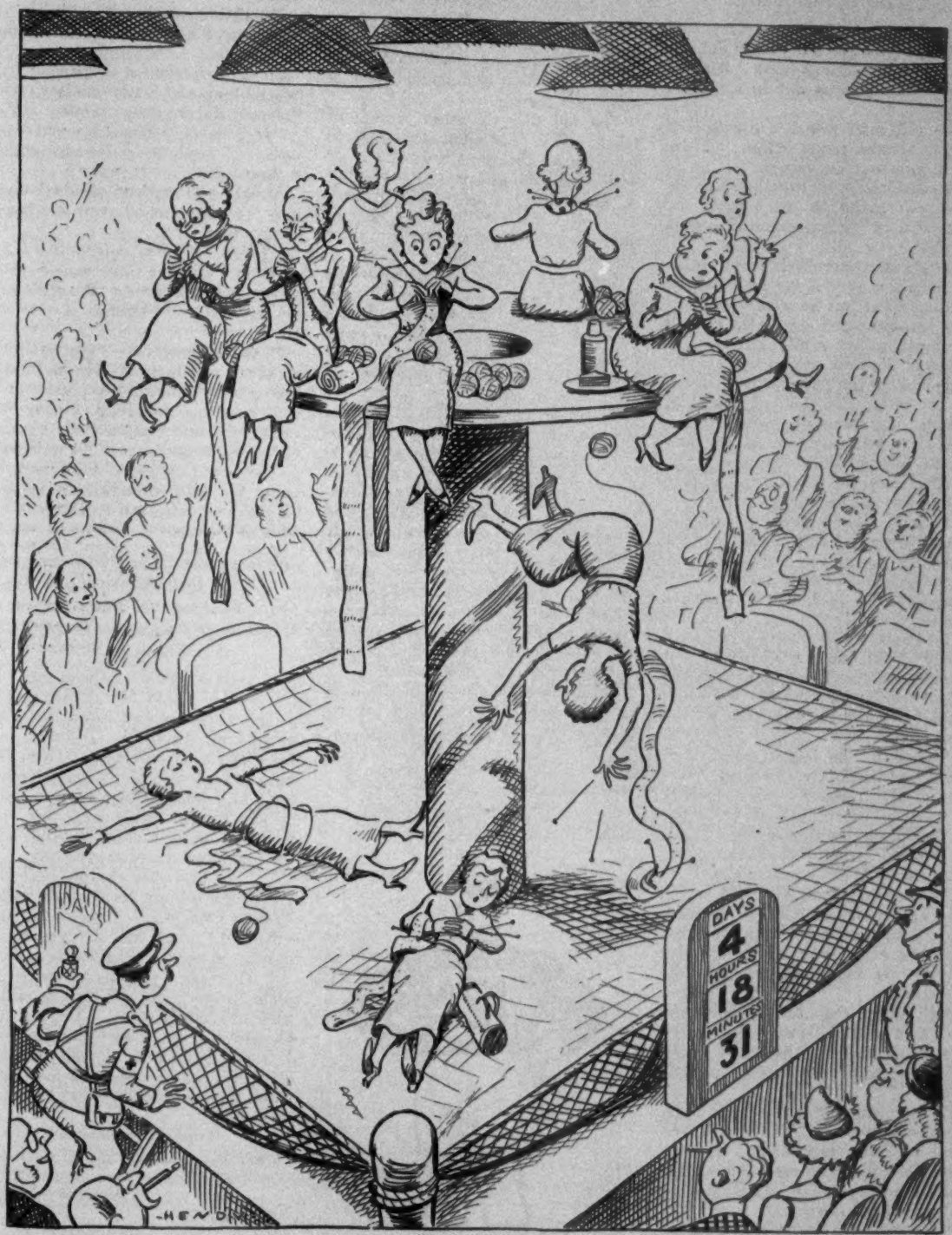
Nevertheless I can't help feeling that inserting Sol hardly solves the whole problem. It would improve the weather immensely, of course; but I have a nasty feeling that a year couldn't very well have thirteen months. It would be silly. After all, everybody knows that there are only twelve months in a year really. And anyhow, thirteen is an unlucky number. I have therefore resolved to submit to the League my own modification of the Cotsworth Calendar. The idea is really rather dazzling in its simplicity. Let us simply *abolish January*. Think of it. Can any man offer a single sound reason for having January? It is always cold and always wet. It is the month of coughs, colds, influenza, bills and income-tax. In January it is no longer nearly Christmas and has not yet started to be spring or Easter or anything pleasant. It contains thirty-one unpleasant days, no single one of them a Bank Holiday. It doesn't even contain a shortest or longest day. The only thing that ever happens in January is the Coldest Day since 1880 or the Wettest Day since the Flood. And both of these, I submit, we could do without. No. The thing is self-evident. Let us abolish January and substitute Sol. It is the one chance we have ever had of doing anything about our climate. It removes the most depressing and expensive month of the year and gives us instead another month of glorious warmth and sunshine. It gives us another month of cricket and one less of football. It gives us—but there, I need not go on. I am afraid we must expect opposition. Conservative feeling will be against us. So will those ghouls who batten on the horrors of January—the doctors, hot-water-bottle makers, the umbrella-makers and the income-tax inspectors. But we shall—we must win through. Up, Sol! *A bas* January!

The Same Old Song

Sing me the same old song, dear,
Set to the same old air,
With harmonies made in Denmark Street,
A trifle the worse for wear;
Pile on the same old sentiment,
Luscious and over-ripe,
Say good-bye to the brow that is high
And serve up the same old tripe.

Whine through the same old mike, dear,
With the same old nasal twang;
Work up the same old sob-stuff,
The "Songs that my mo-thah sang"!
Tune in the same old band, dear,
With saxophones galore,
Tell me the tale that you've told, dear,
To hundreds of girls before.

Tell me you're feeling bored, dear,
In the same old shade of blue,
Never mind rhythm or time, dear,
So long as it rhymes with "you."
Trust to the public taste, dear,
To put it across O.K.,
Serve up the same old tripe, dear,
Just in the same old way.



TENDENCIES IN SPORT

FIFTH DAY OF THE GREAT KNITTING MARATHON AT THE IMPERIAL SPORTS STADIUM

The Spoil Sport

"Can't you get out of my light?" said the wedding-guest fiercely. "They'll be coming out in a minute or two."

The old man rolled a dignified if slightly bloodshot eye at him. "There was a ship——" he began.

The wedding-guest breathed heavily. "Are you going to get out of my light or not?" he demanded menacingly.

The old man appraised him carefully. He wasn't a very large or muscular wedding-guest but he was certainly a very bad-tempered one. He opened his mouth to say something, thought better of it, and moved reluctantly further along the pavement.

"The ship," he said purposefully, buttonholing a small man near him—"the ship was cheered, the harbour cleared, merrily did we drop——"

"Eh?" said the small man, cupping his hand round his ear.

"I said, 'Merrily did we drop,'" repeated the ancient, a little more loudly.

"Ssssh!" said fourteen other spectators, glaring at him. "We can't hear the organ."

The ancient swivelled his eye ferociously at all fourteen intruders, but found himself swivelling it unavailingly at fourteen heedless backs. He swallowed hard and turned back to the small man.

"The ship," he began again, very slowly and distinctly this time, "was cheered, the harbour cleared, merrily did we drop; below the kirk, below the hill, below the lighthouse top."

"Blimey!" said the small man apprehensively. "What's eating *you*?"

The ancient shook his head sadly. "It really comes a bit later," he said, "but I'll tell you now. With my cross-bow," he said impressively, tapping him on the waistcoat, "I shot the albatross."

With quite remarkable speed the small man backed his way through the crowd and made for the safety of the open pavement. He seemed a little shaken.

The ancient, on the other hand, appeared annoyed. "They can't even stand *one* verse nowadays," he muttered gloomily as he made for a large confetti-laden woman standing near the edge of the pavement.

"The ship," he began, removing his hat out of deference to her sex, "was cheered, the harbour cleared——"

The woman gave him a suspicious glance and transferred her hand-bag to the other arm before shifting a little away from him.

"—merrily did we drop," he pursued, moving after her. "Below the——"

"Go away at once!" said the woman indignantly, finding herself on the edge of the pavement and unable to edge away any further.

The old man breathed a sigh of relief. This was more according to schedule he thought, as he fixed her with his glittering eye.

"How *dare* you ogle me, you dirty old man!" she cried angrily. "If you don't go away at once I shall speak to the policeman over there."

He started to remonstrate, but whatever he had to say was lost in the clash of the bells as the couple left the church, and the woman turned away from him to shower benedictions and confetti indiscriminately over a square yard of pavement.

The bridegroom advanced with a sickly grin on his face and half-a-hundredweight of waste-paper down his back, while the bride walked by his side with a glassy smile and wondered why that little brat Nancy would persist in jerking her train and nearly dislocating her neck. When they got to the car the noise subsided as everyone became suddenly aware of a very ancient man in outlandish garb dancing on his hat on the roof of the car and indulging in a stream of deplorable but highly original invective.

"At last!" he howled in the comparative quiet. "*Now* wil. you listen, you flap-eared doddipols! The ship was cheered, the harbour cleared, merrily——"

His little day was all too brief.

"Come off that," ordered the policeman tersely.

He wilted, cast a despairing look around him, and made one last effort. "Merrily did we drop; below——"

"If I have to come up and fetch you . . ." said the policeman with a sinister look.

Meekly the ancient climbed down into the outstretched arms waiting to receive him.

"There, I *knew* he was up to a bit of no good," said the large woman as he was marched forlornly off on the arm of his captor. "Drunk, if you ask *me*."

"Dippy, more like," muttered the small man to himself. He had somehow contrived to acquire possession of the woman's handbag during the excitement and was furtively engaged in stowing it underneath his waistcoat.

The wedding-guest said nothing, being playfully occupied in tying a selection of well-worn footwear to the back of the car.



Extract from "The Puddlewich and District Times."

"Scandalous Behaviour

Magistrate's Rebuke after Amazing Wedding Scene

"'Your conduct has been most reprehensible," said Mr. J. Schpink to a man who appeared before him on a charge of disorderly behaviour at Puddlewich this morning. 'Not only did you pester several of the onlookers, but you caused considerable annoyance to the young couple who were just about to launch hand-in-hand upon the troublous sea of matrimony.

"'I see from the charge-sheet that you describe your vocation as that of "Ancient Mariner." I am all the more surprised that at your age you should indulge in such scandalous behaviour.

"'However, you have spent the night in the cells, and that should be sufficient punishment. You are discharged and may now leave the court. I hope—I sincerely hope—that you leave it a sadder—and if I may quote those famous words of Tennyson—a wiser man.'"

"What can Martock do to Celebrate the Coronation of King George XI.?"
Parish Council Leaflet.

Nothing yet.

"Many people are now beginning to hatch under hens."—*Poultry Note.*

So much simpler than the old-fashioned way of being born, dears.

Brighter Telegrams

It was Thomas who began it, on his summer holiday. Thomas told George that if he (Thomas) and Arthur were going to be back before the week-end, he (Thomas) would send him (George) a wire. If they weren't going to be back he would send nothing at all.

Naturally it rather worried George to receive a telegram on Friday afternoon which ran with simple pregnancy"—

George, 15 Dumbleton Mansions, S.W.30. Arthur eaten by bears. Thomas.

Nor did it make matters any easier when both George and Arthur, perfectly whole and uneaten, turned up at Dumbleton Mansions in the evening and started complaining because the beds weren't made.

"Didn't I tell you," Thomas said, "that if I sent you a wire it meant that we should be back?"

"Yes," said George, "but——"

"When I had carefully explained," Thomas said with patience, "that a wire would mean we were coming back and no wire would mean we weren't coming back, you couldn't really expect me to waste money *telling* you we were coming back, could you?"

"I suppose not," George said doubtfully; but you could see the matter was troubling him.

Thomas, some months later, had a birthday. Thomas is still young enough to take pleasure in birthdays, so those of us who cannot afford to send him a pigskin razor-case mark the occasion with a golden-skinned Greetings Telegram.

George has for many years observed the charming custom of sending some favourite, and occasionally even apt, quotation—as it might be "Ring out the old, ring in the new," or "How now, a rat." This year it struck me as distinctly sinister to see him, on the eve of Thomas's anniversary, earnestly scanning his James Joyce.

Thomas showed me the result, his countenance more in sorrow than in anger. Within its golden case George's many-happy-returns ran:—

Thomas, 85, Twistleton Court, N.W.25. Encompassed of mushroofs. George.

"What's the answer?" Thomas asked.

I said I didn't know, but I would look up my—or rather George's—James Joyce and see. In consequence Thomas's message to George on *his* birthday, which came three weeks later, was—

George, 15 Dumbleton Mansions, S.W.30. Chalkful of masterplasters. Thomas.

George read this on his doorstep with a puzzled frown, and told the telegraph-boy to wait as there would be an answer.

This time he went to Aldous Huxley for his inspiration. An hour later Thomas received the following:—

Thomas, 85 Twistleton Court, N.W.25. Black ladders lack bladders. George.

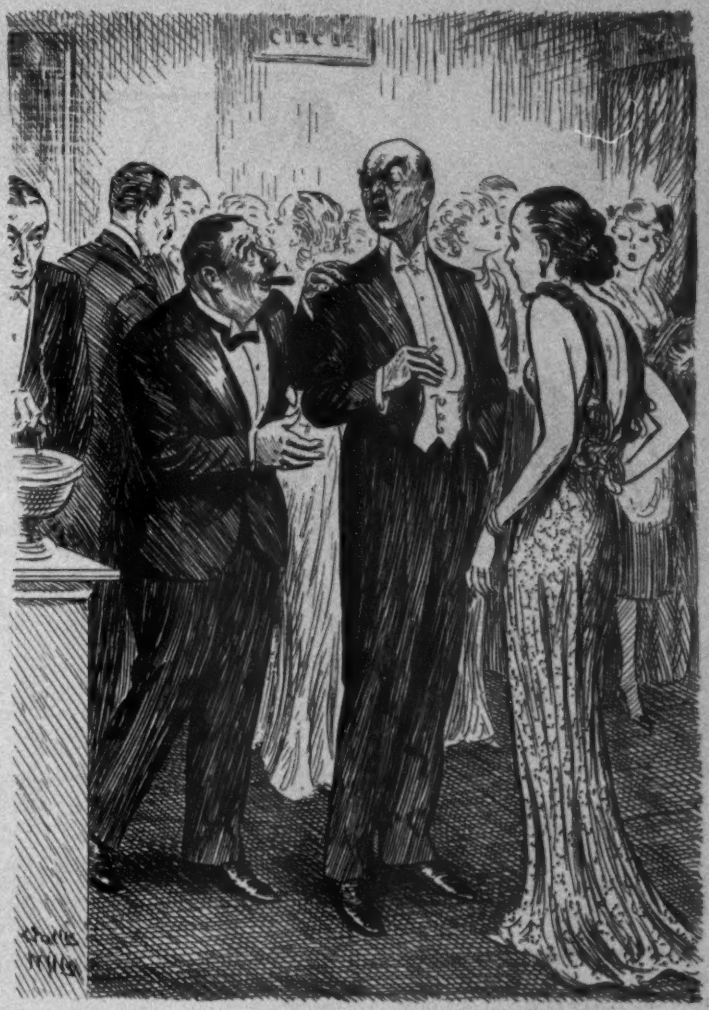
For some reason Thomas chose to regard this message, which might almost be said to be a self-evident truth, as a subtle insult.

"If George is going to be offensive," he said firmly, "I shall simply ignore him altogether."

There is only one way of ignoring anyone altogether by telegram.

Thomas's reply came, not in festive gold but in sixpenny plain yellow:—

George, 15 Dumbleton Mansions, S.W.30. Thomas.



"Why! it's *never* my old friend Charlie Bates?"
"No—nevah!"

"The Death Angel.

The odds against the murderer succeeding were 1542 to 1. What were the odds against the detective? 7s. 6d."—*Advt.*

Had he to buy the book first?



THE NATIVES

Serenade

To the Gas, Light and Coke Company, on the completion of a Giant New Gasholder
(With apologies to FLECKER'S *serenade, "Yasmin")*

How proud to the crestfallen stars the great gasometer uprears
To mock the Large and Smaller Bears—do planets bow the head, Gas-men!

The greatest glory of our shores is your most recent *tour de force*
(The French for "tower of strength," of course), with royal walls of red, Gas-men!

With splendid soaring metal walls and framework topped with spikes and balls,
Its grandeur (like Victoria Falls') shall stand when you are dead, Gas-men!

Beyond your death (may it be far!), above the screams of peace and war—
Yea, till the rouble stands at par, 'twill last, as I just said, Gas-men!

But when the teeming arc-lights play and Night has been and chased out Day,
And some to Mecca turn to pray, and I—I read in bed, Gas-men

(And think, beneath the electric spark, how fine 'twould look in Windsor Park,
But finest in Cimmerian dark, and sadly shake my head, Gas-men),

Then the Gas-Light-and-Coking staff stream for their pint of half-and-half,
Nor hear the whirling planets laugh and cackle overhead, Gas-men!

Smith Minor Thinks of a New One.

"This week I came out 8th in Form, simply because the boy below me worked so hard and so suddenly that I had not time to catch up."
Schoolboy's Letter.

"He informed your correspondent that Mr. Lloyd George was enjoying his stay here immensely. He goes for early morning walks before breakfast and again in the evenings."—*West Indian Daily.*

His evening stroll he takes, with typical Welsh aplomb, at mid-day.

"The Board is now working out an alternative plan to replace that which failed to attract a sufficient number of pigs to meet the curers' requirements."—*Daily Paper.*

Aren't pigs standoffish?



THE INVALUABLE BOGEY

TROTSKY. "YOU DON'T REALLY BEAR ME SO MUCH ILL-WILL, DO YOU, COMRADE?"
STALIN. "ILL-WILL? WHY, EVEN IN MEXICO, CAMARADA, I LOOK ON YOU AS MY RIGHT-HAND MAN!"

Impressions of Parliament

Synopsis of the Week

Monday, January 25th. **—Commons: Empire Settlement Bill given Second Reading.**



"Fair is our lot—O goodly is our heritage!"

MR. DE ROTHSCHILD HOLDS FORTH IMPERIALLY.

Tuesday, January 26th. **—Commons: Message from the King. Debate on Dockyard Dismissals.**

Wednesday, January 27th. **—Lords: Humble Address moved.**

Commons: Debate on Air Defence.

Monday, January 25th.—Cunning Chinese manufacturers are indulging in the game of imitating on their goods the trade-marks of certain British products, and Lord CRANBORNE assured Mr. CHORLTON this afternoon that this had been the subject of diplomatic protests to the Chinese Government. As these are likely to be ineffective, Mr. P.'s R. hastens to suggest that in retaliation British firms should set about the annexation of Chinese trade-marks, which could hardly fail to amuse their customers.

When Mr. MALCOLM MACDONALD broke it tactfully to the House that in his recent conversations with Mr. DE VALERA the famous Gaelic wit had strongly urged the establishment of a united Ireland, only an absence of Ulstermen could have been the reason why no explosion took place. Not that it is difficult to understand the desire of a State, whose professed aim is the recapture of mediævalism, for union with another to whom uncommon sagacity in commercial affairs has brought wealth and stability; but from the point of view of the North it is possible to see how the heartiness of the reciprocal glow might become a little dimmed.

The debate on the Empire Settlement Bill, which got its Second Reading, gave Mr. MACDONALD a further opportunity to explain the Government's attitude to emigration, which should receive every encouragement, he said, as a contribution to the perpetuation of democracy. This point was also brought out in an interesting speech by Mr. DE ROTHSCHILD, who considered that the best way to establish world peace was by peopling the Dominions with men firmly grounded in democratic as opposed to authoritarian traditions.

Tuesday, January 26th.—The Upper House gave a hearty welcome to Lord HAILSHAM on his return to the Woolsack after a long illness. It did little else.

At Question-time in the Commons Mr. BALDWIN, having announced that the Government had revised their decision to build an aircraft factory at Maidenhead (which would have wrecked the Thames Valley) in favour of putting it in Lancashire (where employment is needed), read out a Message from the KING saying that, as it had been the intention of his father and predecessor to recommend a measure to facilitate the appointment of a Regent should the illness, absence, or infancy of the Sovereign demand one, he would be prepared to concur in such legislation. A Bill, Mr. BALDWIN explained, would be introduced to-morrow giving effect to HIS MAJESTY'S wishes.

The Labour Party's Vote of Censure on the Government for the method of its dismissal of five men from naval dockyards was handsomely defeated this evening after a debate which produced several excellent speeches and left no doubt of the gravity with which all Members viewed the case.



"Fokes tole 'im he could git 'long faster by anudder way, but ole Brer Tarrypin, he know w'at he doin'."—*Uncle Remus (nearly)*

SIR THOMAS INSKIP, MINISTER FOR THE CO-ORDINATION OF DEFENCE.

The prosecution was led by Mr. GREENWOOD, who declared that his Party would never countenance treason but insisted that the men had a right to be told the charges against them and to be given an opportunity to defend themselves. What, he asked, about the virtuous indignation of Sir JOHN SIMON over the manner of the trial to which the Vickers engineers were subjected in Russia in 1933? Having read aloud affidavits from three of the dockyard men to show the blamelessness of their ways, he gave instances of the dangerous psychological effects which the dismissals were causing in the moral of the dockyards, and asked for a private inquiry.

Sir SAMUEL HOARE followed him, and, considering



THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY
as seen by Mr. GREENWOOD



"No, Pedro, I'm *not* interested in coffee or rubber. I forgot to mention that I came out here to cure a broken heart."

the ties by which he was bound, made out a convincing defence. It was, in essence, that (1) Sabotage had occurred; (2) The Government, having decided to dismiss certain men, would have preferred to inform them of the charges but found it impossible to do so without giving away the Secret Service, whose continued efficiency was vital; (3) The secret reports had been checked and counterchecked by a committee of high Civil Servants; (4) No other course was open.

For the Liberals, Sir Francis Acland sympathised but asked for a review of the facts by an impartial arbitrator. In a most plausible speech, faultlessly delivered, Sir Stafford Cripps demanded a trial *in camera*. Lord Winterton put the operative question: Did the safety of the Navy come first or did it not? Mr. Maxton, who, when he is roused, is one of the three most impressive speakers in the House, suggested that the men were in jobs too restricted to allow of really dangerous interference, but that if by some means they had contrived this, then mere dismissal was a punishment fantastically inadequate.

Probably the soundest speech of the day was that of Mr. H. G. Strauss, who gave the Opposition credit for sincerity, but asked them to face the facts, and answered Sir Stafford Cripps on his own legal ground. Afterwards Mr. Attlee and Mr. Baldwin filled in what crevices had been left in their rival positions, the latter asking for confidence. He got it, by 330 to 145.

Wednesday, January 27th.—Mr. Simmonds called attention this afternoon to arrears in the air expansion programme, which, according to the Air Force List, was between one and two years behind schedule. Germany, he said, was producing aircraft at a phenomenal speed, even a low estimate giving her first-line strength as 3,000 machines, whereas it appeared that 45 of our 71 new squadrons were lacking, with only nine weeks to go to the date by which they were promised.

He had evidence that the "shadow" industry was already luring skilled labour away from the regular factories, a process which could only have lamentable results; and in addition to improved organisation for the increase of primary supplies, he recommended the institution of special repair factories, more detailed plans for the protection of civilians, and a serious consideration of the question of emergency food and fuel, based on the probability that the London docks might quickly be put out of action.

In his reply Sir Thomas Inskip regretted the references to Germany which had been made, and said that Mr. Simmonds' ingenious calculations had not allowed for a steeply-ascending scale of production. So far as he knew the lag was not greater than three or four months.



OUR BACK-BENCH *WHO'S WHO*

Sir Murdoch Macdonald's greatest claim
To fame
Is the quiet and uncompromising style
In which he dammed the Nile.

Several experts contributed to the debate, and Mr. CHURCHILL, somewhat restrained, reminded the Government of their promise of parity with Germany. Nobody had any right to assume that a quarrel would ever arise in that direction, he said, but that was not the point.

Cricket Correspondents—The Truth

After the manner of our American contemporary "Time"

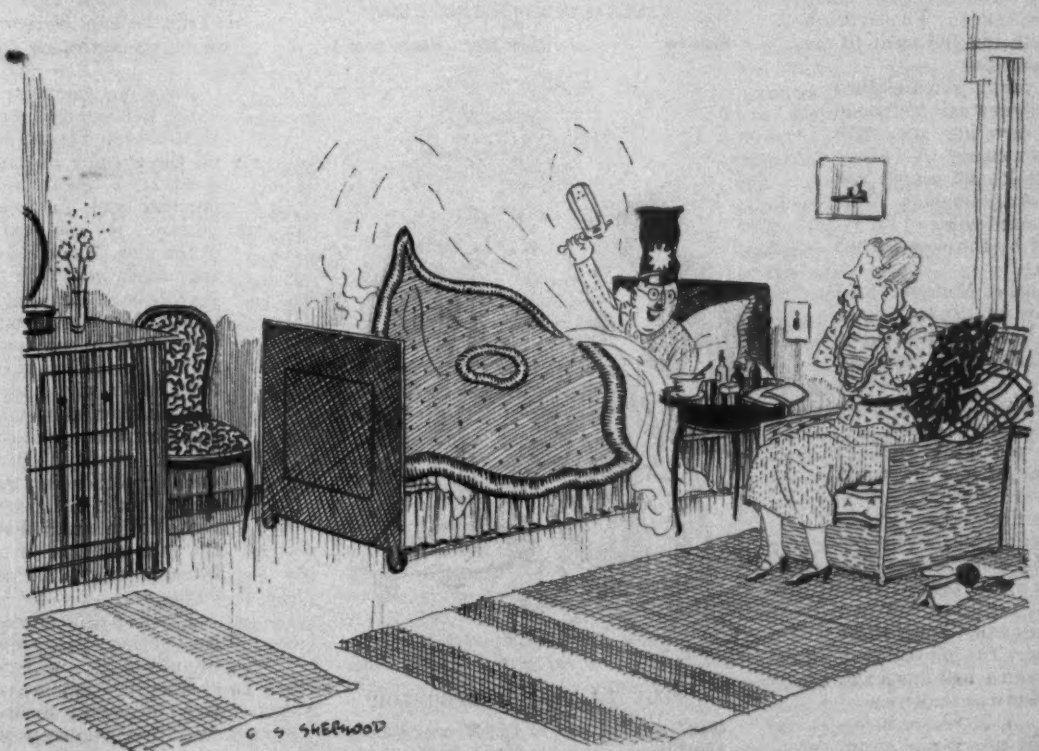
BORED to death is bemonocled, gray-headed, phrase-making C. B. Fry, bat wizard of a few decades back, as he sits in an Australian Press box watching the cricket Test series England *versus* her far flung Dominion, wishing himself in his thatch roofed, ivy creepered cottage back home. Not to his distant public, British fans in British dwellings, does cricket critic Fry convey this impression. Full of sensational incident is his pithy daily commentary on England's national sport in London's *Evening Standard*. Talk of body-line (pitching at the batter's body, not at his home plate), rumours of "Aussie" team rupture, suspicions that 22-year-old, fair headed Don Bradman, World's No. 1 batter by Australian ranking, is losing some of his deadly skill with the willow—all these have been hinted at or openly stated by senior correspondent Fry.

While British fans drink in his words as tho some heavenly nectar, little better than poison are they to patriotic, partisan Australians. Up and down the thinly populated Dominion meetings are held, processions formed up, to denounce the writings of Repton and Oxford educated Fry. From gold mining Orumoru came a delegation to Premier Joseph Aloysius Lyons at Canberra, demanding that, to save bloodshed, critic Fry be at once deported. Out in Australia's "Bush Country" native aborigines (settlers who arrived before England's Captain Cook) beat drums and dance the dance of death.

Startled at the nation wide uprising, stocky, Radical Premier Lyons sent back word to Britain's House of Commons in London that Fry was menacing the Empire's quiet. Calling at 10, Downing Street, town dwelling of pipe smoking Prime Minister Baldwin, were to be seen that day Marylebone Cricket Club Secretary Rait Kerr and *Evening Standard* press baron, Beaverbrook. Huge crowds outside were controlled by thousands of London's stalwart policemen, many graduated from Repton, old college of much discussed Fry.

After three hours of heated conferencing, Prime Minister Baldwin left the house, fought his way thru armies of newshawks and cameramen, stood by his car to issue this statement: "The Cabinet has discussed the position apparently created in Australia by certain newspaper articles published in this country. The matter has been viewed from every angle and it has been decided that until further evidence is forthcoming it would be injudicious for His Majesty's Government to take any definite step."

Not likely to be satisfied is any section of Australian opinion by blunt spoken Baldwin's words. More and more insistent are those howling for Fry's blood. What will happen none can say. Least of all peace loving reporter Fry himself. Asked for an opinion he would take no sides in the bitter wordy battle, but, said he, "the modern Australian batsman knows only two strokes, the wristy hook and the bracket-armed drive."



"NOTHING IS GAINED WITHOUT ENTHUSIASM, AMY—THE ARSENAL ARE PLAYING TO-DAY."

Pockets

THERE are many ways in which women are inferior to men. Women leave doors open, like going to meetings, lose their bags, accept invitations for their husbands as well as for themselves. If two women arrange to meet for lunch on the North side of Piccadilly Circus, at two o'clock you will find one (the more intelligent) standing on the South side, while the other (the typical woman) will be buying stockings at a sales counter in Regent Street. But the most significant proof of all is woman's lack of pockets.

Men can catch buses and shut doors for the simple reason that they have no bag to carry. Men never lose their purses, nor, I am given to understand, would they lose their powder-puffs or their lipsticks if they had them. And why? Simply because they have pockets.

It was when Olga and I both lost our bags on the same day, and my father had said everything a man is expected to say on these occasions, that I made a sudden resolve. I had a drink at a milk-bar and went to see my dressmaker.

The young ladies clothed me in my new suit and stood round covering me with blandishments. A more pleasant lot of people you could hardly imagine. The time seemed ripe.

"And by the way I want a pocket."

"A pocket, Madam?" said the fitter faintly, looking at me as if I had just come from Woolworth's, as indeed I had.

"A *pocket*?" said the most influential lady there.

"Pocket?" echoed a lot of little girls, wishing they could stick their pins into me.

I was firm. The lady in authority agreed, but I could see she would have her revenge in the bill.

* * * *

My suit came home and I put it on. The bill was even larger than I had imagined. The pocket was, shall we say? smaller. I forced a threepenny-bit into it and swaggered downstairs. But even so I still feel inferior.

At the Play

"MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING"
(BLACKFRIARS RING)

ALTHOUGH it has an elaborate sham death of a beautiful and betrothed maiden, *Much Ado About Nothing* is one of the gayest of SHAKESPEARE'S comedies. The central figure of *Beatrice* radiates a briskness which makes the whole affair a quick-moving one, and a certain tardiness in coming to the point which is a characteristic of so many of these comedies is happily absent in this one. It makes capital entertainment for a winter evening, and the Bankside Players, who have been acting it on successive Sunday nights at the Blackfriars Ring, show that a modern audience can be made to enjoy SHAKESPEARE without the scenery which Regent's Park or an ordinary stage provides.



"A PLEASANT-SPIRITED LADY"
Beatrice . . . . . MISS MARGARETTA SCOTT



PLOT TO TRAP A BACHELOR
Claudio . . . . . MR. HUBERT GREGG
Don Pedro . . . . . MR. JACK CARLTON
Leonato . . . . . MR. W. E. HOLLOWAY
Benedick . . . . . MR. JACK HAWKINS

I do not think that this type of play can ever be better for no scenery. What is gained from a stage which has the audience on three sides is very little when there is no need to observe the actors very narrowly as though they were conjurers. What is lost is particularly marked when the eavesdropping—that stock Shakespearean expedient—has to be done without any proper bushes or shrubs. Both *Benedick* and *Beatrice* give the impression of going deliberately into a place labelled "Listening Box." But these open stages need not be kept as rigorously bare of properties as boxing-rings.

Anyway, whether needlessly handicapped or not, the Bankside Players carried off the evening in triumph, creating a great deal of laughter and an eager expectancy for the next turn of the plot. The chief credit may fairly go to Mr. JACK HAWKINS as *Benedick*, who imparted a convincing impression of abounding high spirits, and Miss MARGARETTA SCOTT, who made *Beatrice* snappy, almost in the American sense, and equally full of vitality. In their scenes together they got the utmost out of dialogue which needs to be bandied to and fro with skill or it easily becomes forced and loses its virtue.

That is a difficulty always confronting those who play SHAKESPEARE'S upper-class characters, who are essentially men and women of the world but who seem unnatural because they give so much attention to finding fine words for their thoughts.

Concentration that now goes into cross-word-puzzles went into speech then, and to a generation content to live poorly in this respect the effect of such a very articulate society is highly odd.

It is different with *Dogberry* (Mr. D. G. MILFORD), whose eccentricity is



ANOTHER TUDOR ROSE
MISS NELLIE WALLACE

the more delightful for seeming quite natural. The idea of "characters" with idiosyncrasies needs no cunning recommendation, although it receives it in this instance.

The older men, *Don Pedro* (Mr. JACK CARLTON) and *Leonato* (Mr. W. E. HOLLOWAY), have the same zest in living and the same wide interests as those in their younger prime, and this makes these stories and plays of Renaissance society such cheerful affairs whether the actual plots be tragic or trivial. In their sense of themselves, as in their clothes, these fortunate figures have great advantage over us.

D. W.

At the Music-Hall

"ALL FUN AND FOLLY" (VICTORIA PALACE)

THAT insidious little gadget, the microphone, against which I have inveighed before, is meeting with regrettably little opposition as gradually but very steadily it eliminates the human voice from the theatre. Audiences scarcely seem to care that a number of men and women are being treated with the respect shown previously to great singers, merely because of an ability to murmur cunningly into a tin box; and, more surprising, the occupants of front-row stalls, *i.e.*, those who have paid most, appear to feel no resentment at the extreme difficulty in those seats of catching what is murmured. To drive little more than a whisper clean round a theatre without mechanical aid, as JACK SMITH used to do, was a vocal feat worth its place; but this new trick, in which half the credit goes to the electricians, is too easy and far too kind to mediocrity. I am impelled to these remarks by the performance of Mr. JACKIE HELLER, who is claimed by the programme to be "America's Dynamic Singer of Songs." He may, for all I know, possess a fine mellow voice when unhampered by a microphone, and at the back of the Victoria Palace his words may arrive as clear as crystal; but the fact remains that in the front of the stalls we got about one in ten.

There are eleven items in this show. They are separate and vary widely in quality. Miss NELLIE WALLACE is about the best. It would be idle to pretend that the proprieties concern her much, but she is an artist to her finger-tips and her personality is of



FAT AND GROWING LAUGHS
MR. DICK HENDERSON

a calibre not often seen in these days. Dressed as ANNE OF CLEVES, she gave a description of the introduction of the Flemish Mare to Tudor stables which set the house rocking. And after her I put SHERKOT, another great individualist. His apache dance was good, and his imitation of an old-fashioned juggler (with a sound accompaniment from the orchestra) even better; but his best was when he treated us to his old goal-keeping turn, still as brilliant as ever, against TOM WEBSTER's lovely Mappin Terrace of Cup-Tie faces. As a parodist of humanity SHERKOT is marvellously accomplished.

The film-stars, Miss BEBE DANIELS and Mr. BEN LYON, hardly justified the length of their turn. Miss DANIELS has a pleasant voice which made the words of her songs clear to us in spite of the microphone, and Mr. LYON fools well.



THE PALACE GOAL-KEEPER
SHERKOT

Everyone knows LITTLE FRED and his FOOTBALL DOGS, whose lack of manners on the field would give sleepless nights to those purists who recently bombarded *The Times* newspaper on this subject. Personally I can respect athletes who bite each other without hypocrisy.

MR. DICK HENDERSON is a stout comedian whose songs sailed so close to the wind that the audience luffed and luffed and luffed; LALAGE is an aerialist gracefully built and untiring on rope and trapeze; by the simple expedient of omitting the vital words in a discursive lecture Mr. OLIVER WAKEFIELD gets good comic effects, and his delivery is excellent; Mr. BOB ROBINSON and Miss VIRGINIA MARTIN, who wore a delightful dress, are skilful acrobatic dancers; the sheer slapstick of O'DONELL and BLAIR's house-plastering act, in which everything, including the house, falls to pieces as painfully as possible, gave me much innocent pleasure; and Miss FLORENCE MAYO's horse Felix would have been funnier but for the immobility of its eyes and ears and mouth—a mistake at a time when the standard of stage-horses is so high.

The turns were introduced, in dazzling dresses and broken English, by Miss VERA NARGO. *Multum in argot*, as it were.

ERIC.

Left Hams for Millionaires

UNDER the above headline—end, boy, does it catch the eye?—I read in my morning paper the following paragraph:—

"According to Sir Stephen Tallents, Public Relations Officer to the B.B.C., there are American millionaires who insist on having hams from the left legs of pigs because the animals always scratched themselves with their right legs. Sir Stephen was speaking at the luncheon of the Marden and District Commercial Fruit Show, and he also said he hoped to see the day when the agricultural industry would unite in a nation-wide publicity campaign to bring alive to the great cities not only its fine produce but the skill and labour which went to create it."

Undoubtedly this is a most intriguing item to meet the eye at breakfast-time, but it is a great pity, I feel, that Sir STEPHEN didn't say less about nation-wide campaigns and throw more light on the habit of pigs—and of American millionaires. I am longing to know how they (the millionaires, of course) acquired this interesting but obscure piece of knowledge about pigs scratching. Do they (still the millionaires) keep pigs in their suites in the Barbizon-Plaza or in their penthouses on Park Avenue? Or do they run down to the country every week to make special studies of The Pig—Its Cause and Cure? It looks as though there must be *something* about being an American millionaire that makes one suddenly pig-conscious, because for the life of me I couldn't tell you what leg a pig scratches itself with. In fact the few pigs I have met on any sort of social footing—it was while staying the week-end on Sir Jacob Guzzleworthy's country estate, but of course they were not of the house-party, although on two occasions there was some slight confusion—— Where was I? Oh, yes—the few pigs I have met couldn't have scratched themselves *any*where with *any* leg. They were about the size and shape of a large steamer-trunk and were so obviously built for comfort—and bacon—rather than for scratching. Those that did feel the itch to scratch used the side of the sty. Only one animal while I was there tried to use a leg to allay local irritation, but while it was *his* irritation it was *my* leg, and I couldn't stand up against his gross tonnage. It was rather like trying to stop the launching of the *Queen Mary*. I retired hastily and as a favour let him use the ferrule of my special seeing-round-the-estate-of-friends-before-lunch-on-Sunday stick.

Yet according to American millionaires—than whom of course there can be no more trustworthy source of information—not only do pigs scratch themselves with their hind legs but they do it so often that one can establish as an axiom that they *always* do it with the right leg. And this, mind you, is not wild pig—slim wiry pig that can probably scratch itself all round the clock: it is agricultural pig—heavily-built pig, pig that if it were found dead would be described as "well-nourished"—pig, in a word, specially grown to provide millionaires' breakfast eggs with congenial company. However, we'll let the point go for the moment. ROCKEFELLER and his pals have said pigs scratch and always scratch with the right leg, and we must give their statement every consideration.

The next thing that occurs to me is that it can't be much of a scratch. I mean, even assuming the other three legs are sufficiently sturdy to support the gross weight of the pig while scratching—which I very much doubt—and assuming the pig doesn't keep falling over sideways from unaccustomed effort, which can't be good for his best streaky rashers, there can only be a small area about the size of a saucer on the right-hand side of the stomach which he can deal with at all. A tickle anywhere else would be a dead loss. And the chances of a tickle coming just at that exact spot so often as to make slices of the right ham unfit for consumption by American millionaires seems rather remote. Very remote, now I come to think of it, because surely it's even chance that the pig also gets tickled at the corresponding spot on the left side of the stomach. Are we being asked to believe that the animal hasn't benefited at all by his right-leg experience, that he is so dumb as to try to scratch the left side of his stomach with the opposite leg? Golly! he'd look funny. He'd have to be a contortionist as well as a half-wit, and by then none of him would be eatable—except perhaps the "Bath-chap" from his face. And doubtless even that would have been spoilt by his perpetually worried expression at not being able to bring his scratching campaign to a successful conclusion.

No, Mr. ROCKEFELLER and pals, I'm sorry, but after consideration I can't go with you over this. Why, next thing I know I'll be asking a Soho waiter to bring me a wing of chicken on the flimsy excuse that chickens always keep on the ground. And I shall at once be thrown out of the restaurant because, as everyone knows, Soho chickens have four legs and no wings at all. A. A.



"HOW CAN YOU LOOK ME IN THE FACE, TOMMY?"

"I DON'T KNOW, MISS. I KEEP ASKING MESELF THE SAME QUESTION."

The J.P. in the Home

TEN years as Justice of the Peace have taken their toll. Of course one knows quite well that seventy-odd years—the period over which some of us J.P.'s have sat on the Bench—must have taken a lot *more* toll still; but one can only, in technical words, deal summarily with one's own case.

It was about a week ago, after a particularly lengthy affair concerning a goat that had strayed, with some lack of *savoir faire*, into the very road where the policeman was on duty that one felt oneself being overtaken by a marked tendency to employ the methods of the police-court in the home.

One was making light conversation in the drawing-room. Actually, Laura was making most of it—and one was reading the paper and listening, and Charles was reading the paper.

"Do you know what Cook said yesterday? You'll be terribly sorry," she began, though there was but little vicarious distress in her manner.

"Cook bounced in and just said——"

I winced involuntarily.

"You mean that Cook entered and made a statement."

I waited—but so did Laura.

"Well?" she said at last.

"Well, what?" one replied, forgetting for the moment the judicial phraseology.

"I thought you were going to tell



"I HATE TO CONTRADICT YOU, OLD MAN, BUT I THINK I AM RIGHT IN SAYING THAT THE ACTUAL RATE OF FLOW IS NINE THOUSAND MILLION GALLONS AN HOUR, NOT 'MILES.'"

me what the statement was," Laura said. "You seem to know more about it than I do. *I* thought she just said the last of the blue plates had gone."

"Cook," I replied patiently, "made a statement regarding some plates. I'm not sure that Cook oughtn't to be here before you say anything further."

"She can't. It's her evening out."

Well, as a matter of fact, it was.

"Proceed," I told Laura.

"It *was* the last of the blue plates. She told me it had just come to pieces in her hand, like."

"She made a statement to that effect, you mean?"

"Yes, and then I went to the kitchen."

"You later proceeded to the kitchen in consequence of information received and made a thorough search of the premises?"

"I didn't have to make any search at all. I saw the pieces on the table and I took them away to see if anything could be done—but it can't."

"Your attention was immediately drawn to a quantity of broken crockery on the table, which you then impounded?"

Laura, looking rather dazed, said Yes, she supposed that was it.

"And when did all this take place?"

"Yesterday, after tea."

"On the fourth ultimo, at approximately five-thirty P.M.?" I suggested.

"What on earth is the matter with you?" Laura said.

I explained that nothing was the matter but that I was just feeling the effects of my magisterial work.

Laura, as soon as she had grasped what I meant, fell in with the idea enthusiastically.

"Would you like me to call corroborative evidence?" she inquired eagerly. "I easily could. At least, Gladys was in the scullery when Cook dropped the plate, because Cook said that Gladys said, 'There's that cat again,' when she heard the crash."

I ruled the corroborative evidence to be inadmissible.

"Then honestly I think Cook ought to be allowed to appear in court—I mean in the drawing-room—and answer the charge against her."

"Cook," I replied, "has to all intents and purposes already pleaded guilty to the charge."

"Well, I'm not sure. You see, she didn't say she *broke* the plate. She said it came to pieces in her hand, like. Is it really fair to convict her on that?"

I said I thought it was. My actual expression was "There is no alternative but to convict."

"And fine her the price of the plate, I suppose? One-and-elevenpence at the very least, I should say. Can I ask for costs? I believe witnesses often do."

I intimated that the question of costs would receive no consideration.

"I think," said Laura, "that you ought to ask whether there's anything previously known. And of course there is. Dozens of saucers, and two tumblers, and the spout of the nursery teapot—unless it really *was* the poor cat, which I don't believe for one instant."

I rose—as the Court so often does.

"Aren't you going to tell me what the fine will be?" asked Laura.

"The penalty is not yet fixed," I replied.

What I really said to Cook next morning was, "Well, never mind, Cook, we all know that accidents will happen. Now about the fish-pie . . ." E. M. D.

Coming Shortly

OUR Literary Society has suffered a good deal from the rival attraction of a new super-cinema, and the Committee has taken a leaf out of the cinema's book with the following announcement of our special mid-winter concert:—

THRILLS!
THRILLS!
THRILLS!

The Little Wobbley Literary Society (in conjunction with the Nether Drooping Dramatic Society), has the honour to announce for next Saturday

ONE NIGHT ONLY

a superb ten-feature programme with a galaxy of stars. The greatest concert of 1937. Under the personal direction of

L. Conkleshill

who gave you

"THE CHRISTMAS CAROL" (1936)
and
"A PAIN IN THE NECK" (1935)

The Programme will include

MRS. JOHNSON-CLITHEROE (by permission of the VICAR), in a magnificent soul-stirring solo of intrigue and passion in the hot sandy deserts of the East, entitled "I'll Sing Thee Songs of Araby," and

HOGG
HOGG
HOGG

assisted by

CONKLESHILL
CONKLESHILL
CONKLESHILL

in ten minutes of whirlwind magic and illusion, with MISS WAGG at the piano.

Followed by the most sensational attraction of this or any other year—a PERSONAL APPEARANCE of the VICAR, who has consented to recite

"GUNGA DIN"
"GUNGA DIN"
"GUNGA DIN"

with the Greatest Pianist of all time at the

PIANO
PIANO
PIANO

(MISS WAGG)

Followed by a

DUET
DUET
DUET

by those great stars of variety

HOGG AND CONKLESHILL
HOGG AND CONKLESHILL
HOGG AND CONKLESHILL

who will render what is undoubtedly the greatest song of all time, the song that has melted hearts from China to Peru, the song that took the PUBLIC BY STORM.

The title of this song will be announced later, as there is a bit torn out of the music of the one we intended to have.

After this, in response to an overwhelming public demand, the management have pleasure in announcing a REPEAT PERFORMANCE of the

VICAR
VICAR
VICAR

giving his unmatchable imitation of a hen laying an egg, which gained such tremendous applause when he did it in

1927
1928
1929
1930
1931
1932
1933
1934
1935
1936

MISS WAGG will again accompany the egg-laying on the piano.

Interval for Refreshments at

POPULAR
POPULAR
POPULAR
PRICES.

Followed by what is perhaps the greatest treat ever offered to its public by the Society—two of England's greatest entertainers in a short sketch pregnant with thrills, drama and passion, ravelling the heart-strings of human emotion.

WHO ARE THESE STARS?

GUESS!
GUESS!
GUESS!

HOGG AND CONKLESHILL
HOGG AND CONKLESHILL
HOGG AND CONKLESHILL

The evening will come to a

GRAND CLIMAX
GRAND CLIMAX
GRAND CLIMAX

with an unparalleled *Silver Collection* in aid of the

ORGAN ORGAN ORGAN FUND.



"ASK THE OTHER YOUNG LADY."

Critic on the Hearth

"I WENT to the theatre last night," said Aunt Miriam. "It's a very good show; you must go."

"What was on?"

"Oh, just variety."

"I don't like variety usually," I said.

"No, it is rather inclined to live up to its name, isn't it? But you'd like this show, I'm sure."

"Who's in it?" I asked.

"I really couldn't tell you. I *had* a programme, but I lost it. Anyway, they were probably nearly all false names. There was a conjurer, though. He did things with eggs."

"Most conjurers," I pointed out, "do things with eggs."

"Oh, but he dropped them and broke them," Aunt Miriam protested. "He was *so* amusing."

"Anyone can break eggs by dropping them. It's quite a recognised method. That doesn't prove that he was a specially clever conjurer."

"I'm not trying to prove it. I'm telling you. There's no need for you to get cross about it."

I apologised fittingly.

"Then there were some girls who danced. Most remarkable young women. I'm sure *I* was never that shape."

"Everybody can dance nowadays," I said.

"Ah, but these girls danced on their hands. Everybody can't do that."

"They'd probably have done better on their feet."

"You mustn't leap to conclusions," said Aunt Miriam. "Some people are like that. Until she got chronic chilblains my Cousin Aurora used always



"SHERRY, SIR? WOULD IT BE FOR LADIES, OR SOMETHING A LITTLE FINER?"

to crochet with her feet. She did it so that she could play the fiddle to herself at the same time."

"What has she to do with the dancers?"

"Not a great deal perhaps. But it just shows, doesn't it? There were some acrobats too. I can't tell you how good they were, but they were tumbling all over the place and standing on each other. They were really *extremely* funny, and, considering that they were quite likely to break their necks any moment, it was amazing how cheerful they kept."

"It's all part of the business," I explained kindly.

Aunt Miriam looked incredulous. "You young people," she said, "have no sense of wonder left. There was another young man too who made the sort of noises you sometimes hear on the wireless. But I think he had a sore throat, because he had to sing through a kind of megaphone. Everyone was very sympathetic, though, and I should think he sings quite pleasantly when he's well."

I didn't try to disabuse her.

"Then there were two comedians who told the funniest stories. Of course I can't remember a single one now, but they seemed very amusing at the time."

"You seem to have enjoyed yourself," I said.

"That's just what I've been trying to tell you. You must go to-morrow."

"It's Monday to-morrow."

"Oh, yes, so it is. Then they'll have a different programme. A pity. Still," said Aunt Miriam, "I think I've given you some idea of how good it *was*."

"To-night Vishinsky ordered 5,000 Ogpu men (secret police) to be flung round the court before the trial starts at noon."
Daily Paper.

The old Russian Folk-Game of "Flinging the Ogpu man" is still popular among the peasants.



"Beginner, George—of fifty-five years' standin'."

The Britisch Empire

Typical conversations for nordic students of britisch ways and means

Some Milords Scheme a Tour.

Lord Smith. News has broken out, a fog shall lurk all over London, so that a milord shall not know where he may not be.

Lord Robinson. I don't smile at the idea of poor visibiliti. Besides, it dampens.

Viscount Brown. I propound we go to a district less opaque, with sunschine rays and a more estimable temperature.

Lord Smith. Gracious me! Why not? What about the Empire?

Lord Robinson. The very thing! I approve of the Empire. By the way, I have not seen it for some time.

Viscount Brown. Let us hurry, so as not to miss some of it, and be back for Cricket, to regard it at Milords.

Lord Smith. Shall we journey by land and sea or by fresh air?

Lord Robinson. Oh, let us go by way of the sky!

Viscount Brown. Dear me! I am timid of flight. What if we were to tumple, with bumps, and perchance be embroiled in the mechanics of the contraption and become wounded?

Lord Robinson. Coward! Custard! It is safe and sound as some houses. Do not tremple.

Lord Smith. The airsman shall prevent something, whatever it might be, from going a-miss. Such are his instructions.

Viscount Brown. Then I shall be audacious. Would that not I should be he of whom it should be spoken that his plucque did not reach scratch! I can say Bo! to geese, very loudly!

Lord Robinson. Bravo, milord! What you have just disclosed is in first-class taste, very britisch!

Lord Smith. Whither firstly?

Viscount Brown. The Western Indias, say I, but taking schip.

Lord Robinson. For my part I propound Johannesburg, where it shall now be warm as some toast.

Lord Smith. Hear! Hear! Hear! The apparatus goes up in not many days. Let us go with it.

Viscount Brown. Oh!

Lord Robinson. Let us at once have our belongings embaggaged and make arrangements.

Lord Smith. Delicious! I can hardly wait to arrive on the Empire!

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Apprenticeship to Royalty

ENGLISHMEN on the whole have never lent ear to the heresy—WYCLIFF'S, if I remember rightly—that the private life of a functionary, if evil, necessarily unfits him for his public duties. They found the Hanoverians inclined to give less trouble than the Stuarts and were willing to wink at their shady investments, rapacious mistresses and abominable family quarrels. I doubt, however, whether Sir GEORGE ARTHUR has done the dynasty a service in assembling the preponderatingly wretched lives of *Seven Heirs Apparent* (THORNTON BUTTERWORTH, 12/6); for of the princes whom he passes in review—GEORGE I. to EDWARD VIII.—only the last couple, he admits, served their onerous apprenticeship under reasonably happy conditions. The fact that the first four lives can be handled with comparative candour, while the last three are necessarily treated with cautious conventionality, renders the book historically unbalanced and critically absurd. And the absurdity is heightened by the fact that the last flattering section was written before the abdication of KING EDWARD, which, had it been mooted sooner, might have enabled Sir GEORGE—as it did so many of his countrymen—to forget the traditional rule of patriotic discretion—*de regnantibus nil nisi bonum*.



Voice from bedroom-window. ". . . AND MIND YOU DON'T FORGET THE INSTALMENT ON THE REFRIGERATOR."

Sidelines of a Zoologist

So many different subjects are vividly presented in Sir PETER CHALMERS MITCHELL'S *My Fill of Days* (FABER AND FABER, 15/-) that if one did not know that he was for thirty-two years secretary of the London Zoo and virtually the creator of Whipsnade one might be puzzled to guess his real occupation. Four chapters of his book relate to an attempt made by Sir PETER—then in his fifties and a novice at flying—two pilots and two mechanics to test the air-route from Cairo to the Cape. This was done in 1920 for *The Times*, and arose out of a conversation with Lord NORTHCLIFFE on the recent survey by the Air Ministry, followed by a few seconds on the telephone in which Lord NORTHCLIFFE instructed his manager to buy an aeroplane and make all arrangements. That they got as far as Tabora is almost incredible when we read of lengthy engine repairs at every landing (most of them forced). In the final quick crash tragedy was averted by such skilful piloting that Sir PETER confesses that it was not until afterwards that he realised the danger. "And," he says, "it was not until several years later that I was able to enjoy an air accident story of my own invention: 'Hell!' said the pilot as the plane crashed in flames. 'Yes,' said the Devil." The book contains many other such pithy stories.

A Novelist on Novelists

Miss STORM JAMESON has some hard things to say of reviewers in *Delicate Monster* (IVOR NICHOLSON AND WATSON, 5/-), such as "a cultivated critic can scarcely avoid acquiring some standards of criticism which in the nature of his task will prove a great nuisance to him," but it is easy to forgive her, for she is almost more unkind to novelists. Certainly the attitude to both fits the character in whose mouth or pen—for the book is written in the first person—she puts them. It is the story of two women, one a disillusioned unhappy creature, a novelist who sees nothing lovable in her own character, and yet can show both kindness and understanding. Her friend and enemy, the Delicate Monster of the title, is the meanest wanton I ever remember meeting in a book, and I cannot see why Miss JAMESON troubled to spend so many words on her. The Monster's frank little daughter and the nice boy she marries are bright spots in an ugly clever book which leaves a rather painful impression on the reader's mind.

An American in Abyssinia

A war-correspondent, I suspect, must never quite grow

up if he wishes to transmit tolerable copy. Mr. HERBERT MATTHEWS stayed the whole Abyssinian course with the Italian Army on behalf of *The New York Times*; and when he tells us that he found the Italians well-intentioned but childish he strikes me as describing pretty aptly the calibre of his own report. *Eyewitness in Abyssinia* (SECKER AND WARBURG, 12/6) is probably as truthful as pro-Italian and anti-British bias permits—considerably more truthful than the original despatches which had necessarily to leave out the poison-gas and a good deal else. Courageous, competent and lucky, the writer got what "stories" were going at the Front and wrote them up at Asmara; witnessed the most dangerous feat of the war with a flying column trapped in Dankalia, and finally accompanied BADOGLIO into Addis Ababa. "The enemy" were not, he explains, bred to guerilla tactics. They could only fight massed under good leaders—and good leaders were scarce. He is mildly scandalised at BADOGLIO's want of generosity to a brave foe; but his own attitude towards the war itself and the squalid licence of its European protagonists is perhaps even more remarkable.

Towards the World-State

Politics to-day, says Mr. STEPHEN SPENDER, is not an abstract argument but a question of the life or death of our civilisation, for there is no other alternative to war than international Socialism, and the interval in which the choice must be made is perilously short. Hating the tyrannies and stupidities of Fascism, yet not blindly worshipping spy-ridden Communism after the Russian model, he seeks the classless democratic world where alone the individual may be free. Official Liberalism having spent its power in paving the way, and official Labour having fulfilled its destiny in disclosing the futility of further formal party action, the future now lies with Mr. SPENDER and those who are prepared to Act. In *Forward From Liberalism* (GOLLANCZ, 7/6) he is occasionally obscure, occasionally in danger of damaging his case by overstatement, and he clean overlooks, I think, certain of the fundamental elements of his problem, yet he faces intolerably oppressive questions with vivifying intellectual courage and opens a campaign of conversion with a mystical searching of his own political heart that turns his Socialist creed into a rare human religion.

The Bulldog Breed

It seems to me, if I may say so, that "SAPPER" is getting his second wind. A little time ago it was possible to think that his zest was waning and his work becoming too mechanical, but his last book of short stories and *Challenge* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 7/6) go far to banish such doubts and fears. When *Hugh Drummond* sets out to track down and thwart a gang of villains, events that put a sufficient tax on one's powers of belief are to be expected; and they are not conspicuous by their absence in this yarn. But taken in the right spirit, *Hugh's* latest adventures make good reading, and not until the end does he get into one of those apparently hopeless positions from which he has so often emerged. *Ronald Standish* does not play a conspicuous part on this occasion, but *Algy Longworth* as a complete nitwit gives a most entertaining performance.



"YOUR CONCEPTION, MISS DEL ASPHODEL, OF THE HEROINE IS UTTER CLERKENWELL, MINE IS MAYFAIR."

Quest

Mr. RUPERT CROFT-COOKE'S *Crusade* was a notable excursion, even if it was not in some respects satisfactory. Now, with *Kingdom Come* (JARROLDS, 7/6), he gives further proof of his abilities as a novelist. *Rey Landel*, a film-star who was weary of his popularity, decided to disappear. This he contrived to do, and presently he arrived in a remote village at the foot of the Andes, where he hoped to find peace and happiness. From the start, however, he was received with suspicion, and every reason except the true one is put forward to explain his presence. In the description of *Rey's* failure to win the friendship of the natives Mr. CROFT-COOKE scores points again and again. Until the close nothing intensely dramatic happens, but with real art the suspicion that *Rey* at first aroused is shown, from various causes, to grow into intense hatred. Here is a story in which romance and characterisation walk happily hand-in-hand.

A Winner

With the intention of creating a nice new gentleman-burglar, Messrs. HARRAP some two years ago promoted a "£1,500 Cracksman Novel Competition," and in the opinion of several expert judges, *Meet the Baron* (7/6) was worthy of the prize. It is a decision which admirers of *Raffles* and *Arsène Lupin* will assuredly applaud, for, although Mr. ANTHONY MORTON'S psychology is at times unsound, such a defect is of little consequence in a story of this type. The important matter is that from the moment when *John Mannering* resolves to live by his wits until he finds himself desperately near Queer Street, the pot of excitement is kept continually boiling.

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Charivaria

"NOISE is responsible for the loss of a great deal of time," says a psychologist. "On the contrary," says a burglar.

★ ★ ★

When arrested, an American gangster had one large revolver and three small ones in his pockets. One theory is that his gat had had gittens.

★ ★ ★

Unemployed Hungarians engaged in taking gold from the Blue Danube are averaging only about ten shillings per week. It is feared that STRAUSS and his followers may have already squeezed it dry.

★ ★ ★



Fumes were seen to be rising from a telephone kiosk recently. What makes the story so extraordinary is that there was no subscriber inside.

★ ★ ★

"Never admit to yourself that you are a wallflower," advises a writer in a woman's paper. Don't be shelf-conscious, whatever happens.

★ ★ ★

We learn from a zoologist that monkeys will make hideous grimaces in front of a mirror. And without using a razor either.

★ ★ ★

A voice-expert says that the voices of most famous people sound very disappointing over the telephone. He should try offering them some money instead.

★ ★ ★

"If a scholarship is at stake," says a teacher, "pupils should draw for it." The suggestion is particularly convincing when it's an Art scholarship.



An ESSEX man who comes up to town every day by train is very annoyed because, he says, he hasn't had a seat either way for ten years. All we can do to console him is to point out that the first ten years are probably the worst.

★ ★ ★

A strange white bird in a very exhausted condition has been found near Geneva. One good theory is that it may be the dove of peace.

★ ★ ★

It is reported that there are two lunatics in the world who think they are TROTSKY. According to STALIN one of them is right.

★ ★ ★

A Mayfair correspondent says that he has been ordered by his doctor to avoid anything with starch in it. Which looks as if the doctor that all boiled-shirt haters havebeen waiting for is here at last.



★ ★ ★

In a recent interview a Russian exile declared that he was afraid of marrying a certain countrywoman of his as he suspected that she had been sent over to lure him back to Moscow. His love, he meant to say, was like a Red, Red ruse.

★ ★ ★

"The well-bred child always retires from the room if its parents disagree," says a writer. In any case it should inquire if the row is going to be "A" or "U."

★ ★ ★

In his reminiscences a playwright recalls that when he produced his first play the audience chased the players out of the theatre. Anyway, they got a bit of a run.



The Mystery Man

(An imaginary interview with an Arch-Commissar, with apologies to the shade of SWINBURNE*; it is very important, by the way, that the principal name should be pronounced—roughly—as Stahleen.)*

SIT down and let me hold your hat,
Let your head lean
Sideways a moment with its mat
Of hair, STALIN.

Soft hair brushed back in coilèd loops
Whose brilliantine
Shines like a lure that leads your dupes
To death, STALIN.

What will you drink? Or wine or blood
Or epicene
Strange compound mixed of *kvas* and mud?
Say when, STALIN.

Does it seem good where you are set
On heights serene
To have both hands so stained, so wet
With crimes, STALIN?

Do all these comrades now bumped off,
Yet erst so keen,
Trouble you with a nasty cough
At nights, STALIN?

Tell me your fierce thoughts as a boy,
Ere age set in.
Talk about TROTSKY. Don't be coy
With me, STALIN.

A star above your birthday burned—
Most likely green—
That no astronomer has learned
As yet, STALIN.

Not loveless, for you serve one love,
The vast machine,
Beyond all kingdoms and above
All powers, STALIN.

The Earth-wide Proletarian State,
Goddess and queen,
Touched with her lips your lips for hate
And love, STALIN.

But now what lusts your bosom shake
That those who win
Your fellowship at once must make
Their wills, STALIN?

Are you so meshed in murderous plots
By foes unseen?
Is this the Five Years Plan? Or what's
The game, STALIN? EVOE.

Fun in High Places

THE merry lilt of laughing barristers has been heard in the King's Bench Division once again. Spectators tittered, clerks roared, solicitors slapped their thighs, and even the patient suffering faces of the jurymen relaxed into thin smiles at passages which occurred between a witness and the Judge during a breach of contract case last week. It does not matter in the least what the case was about, nor what was the name of the contesting parties, nor anything about it. On the one side, it may be assumed, was some firm of established reputation eagerly declaring, "You done us dirt"; on the other a second and no less respectable firm protesting with equal vehemence, "Brother, you got us wrong." But all this is beside the point and, as the Law well says, *Non dignum memoratu.** All we need to know is that an analytical chemist was in the witness-box and that high above him, an embodiment of British Justice, sat Mr. Justice CHARLES.

Witness. If you really want to examine a particular smell so as to identify it you must have a chemist's nose.

Mr. Justice Charles. Have you a chemist's nose?

Witness. I have (*laughter*).

Mr. Justice Charles. Is it the one you have with you? (*Laughter.*) Do you mean that the smell which the uninitiated nose smells is different from the smell which your nose smells? (*Laughter.*)

The witness said it undoubtedly was.

There was quite a lot more of this good-natured frolicking but we must resist the temptation to quote in full. One more brief exchange between the Judge and another witness is all the indulgence we can permit ourselves:—

Witness. No. When I went home I did not wear my clothes.

Mr. Justice Charles (*naturally shocked*). What! You did not wear your clothes home? (*Loud laughter.*)

The witness explained that she did not walk home in her business-dress.

This last remark of the witness was not thought funny. I don't know why. It may have been that the witness did not put enough drollery into her intonation. But certainly, in the account I have before me, there is no indication that so much as a smile greeted the artless explanation. On the contrary I read that "The hearing was adjourned until to-day"—probably to give the witness a chance to polish up her repartee. Not even Mr. Justice CHARLES can do much with an indifferent "feed."

The rich humour of the British Bench has long been famed in song and story. In part, no doubt, it springs from the natural liveliness and love of fun of the Judges themselves. All truly great and good men are mirthful; look at MUSSOLINI for one. But in the main it is the result of a deliberate policy. A timely joke helps to relieve the strain of a long or difficult trial. Like the comic interludes in a stage tragedy, the merry exchanges between Judge and witness or Counsel restore to the Court a sense of balance and proportion. A valuable atmosphere of reality is shed over the normally rather rarefied proceedings. And of course it helps to keep the jury awake.

So we should do wrong to jeer at judicial badinage or the time-honoured dodge of judicial denseness. Rather ought we to wish that something of this courtly levity would irradiate other assemblies and halls of debate, where solemnity reigns almost uninterrupted on her stuffy throne. There is one place in particular where it would not be amiss:—

Mr. Speaker. Do I understand that the Bill at present before the House has something to do with foreign cheese?

The Member for Glossop. I hope, Sir, shortly to convince the House that unless steps are immediately taken—such

* If the Law doesn't say this, so much the worse for the Law.



THE OLD CAMPAIGNER

J. B. "DAMME! IF THE BOYS HAD ONLY GOT THE SPIRIT THAT I HAD WHEN I FIRST PUT THIS UNIFORM ON."



THE BRITISH CHARACTER

FONDNESS FOR LAUGHING AT OUR OWN ANECDOTES

steps as are in fact embodied in the present Bill—unless, I say, steps are taken——

Mr. Speaker. Whose steps? (*Laughter.*)

The Member for Glossop. British steps, Sir—not Russian. (*Cheers and laughter.*) Unless, I repeat, these steps are taken, and taken quickly, the British cheese-producer is doomed. As in the case of eggs——

Mr. Speaker. What are eggs?

The Member for Glossop (*moving vainly for papers and speaking with some hesitation*). According to my instructions an egg is a spheroidal, largely albuminous body, with a yellow centre or yolk and a hard but not unbreakable outer covering or husk of a chalky compost. It is the product, for the purposes of this debate, of the domestic hen.

Mr. Speaker. But what has all this to do with cheese? The hon. Member for Glossop must keep to the point. He is confusing the House.

The Member for Glossop. I am confusing myself. (*Laughter.*)

I don't believe the SPEAKER has ever really grasped the possibilities of his position. We could do with a lot more of this sort of thing in Parliament.

The Prime Minister. I was having a bath in my flat——

Mr. Speaker. Having a bath in your *hat*? (*Laughter.*)

The Prime Minister. No, Sir. My hat is not large enough. (*Laughter.*) You must be thinking of my right honourable friend the Member for Epping. (*Loud laughter.*) That is, if he ever has a bath. (*Renewed hysterics.*) I said, "A bath in my *flat*." (*Laughter.*)

Mr. Speaker. Oh, flat! It is news to me that the Prime Minister possesses a flat. Would it be correct to describe Number 10, Downing Street, in that way?

The Prime Minister. No, Sir. It would be most improper. (*"Oh, oh!" and laughter.*)

Mr. Speaker. Then where is this flat? (*Cries of "Answer," "Resign," "I will give you the ke-eys of heaven," etc.*)

The Prime Minister's Permanent Parliamentary Secretary (*with or without portfolio*). Mr. Speaker, I object. You have no right——

The Prime Minister (*shouting above the uproar*). I have no flat. I am simply attempting to read to the House a letter from one of my constituents, illustrating housing conditions in Worcester.

A Voice. Where the sauce comes from. (*Laughter.*)

Mr. Speaker. He'd better not give *me* any. (*Loud and prolonged laughter, ending in the fall of the Government and the collapse of the Party system.*) H. F. E.

Intimations of Spring

THOUGH still remote from vernal bud and blossom,
The windflower chilly and the primrose rathe,
When Lenten lilies dare the winds that toss 'em,
And Albert, our canary, starts to bathe,
Though wintry snow, dispelling wintry snuffles,
Has still to come, I feel it's time to sing
However snell the wild nor'easter whuffles,
Of the return of Spring.

Sparrows are nesting, partridges are pairing,
The aconite displays his Toby frill;
Two butterflies were seen to take an airing
In Kent last week. Beneath my window-sill
Byzantine snowdrops, cold and rain forgotten,
Dream of the sun, while scattered thereabout
Are early croci, covered with black cotton
To keep the sparrows out.

I wonder if they dream of Asia Minor,
These hopeful exiles under leaden skies,
Of sun-baked hills where sprouts the jocund vine or
The windy uplands where the goatherd plies
His artless trade. Do they in stalk and stamen
Yearn for the Spring, and will they cut up rough
And say the sort of thing one hears from draymen
When Boreas does his stuff?

How vain are such anthropomorphic fancies!
For who believes, despite Professor BHOSE,
That fear afflicts or groundless hope enhances
The life that in each painted petal glows?
Blind instinct moves them, dull tropistic urges
Summon them forth their native meads to deck:
The poor transplanted blossom then emerges
And gets it in the neck.

Yet who can say? Some Swedish meteorologist
Tells us a warmish winter is in store
Because the Gulf Stream—such his story's hollow gist—
Is warmer than it's ever been before.
That would exactly suit these early comers,
Who will not worry if along in May
A Frightful Frost plays havoc with the Summer's
Crop—they'll have had their day.

But why be pessimistic? Seasons vary,
And I rejoice, as all good gardeners ought,
If some choice bulb sneaks out in January
That ought to wait till March, and isn't caught.
And if, beset by some fell devastation,
It longs in vain for Southern skies of blue,
I offer it this trifling consolation—
I'd like to be there too.

ALGOL.



"IF YOU TELL DADDY I'LL PUT YOU ON THE SPOT."

Mathematics for the Pillion

(When I was reading Professor Lancelot Hogben's *Mathematics for the Million* I was struck by the thought that he has made no direct provision for those young people who wish to enjoy their heritage of mathematics while riding on the back of motor-bicycles. I make it myself, here.)

How We Have the Bulge on the Greeks.

Euclid and the other Greek mathematicians never rode on the back of a motor-bicycle. They were so ignorant of the advantages which we ought now to be using to make a planned society that they never even rode on the front of one. Theirs was an essentially aristocratic culture in which so popular a device as the motor-cycle, which can be used to spread economic enlightenment throughout a very large community, could have no place.

The Greeks preferred to work with abstractions and, as it were, in the air. If you look at Fig. 1 you will see at what

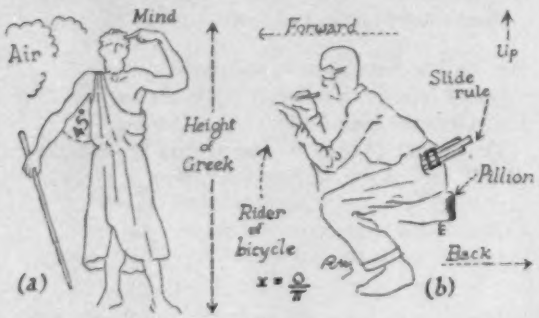


Fig. 1.

a disadvantage this placed them in comparison with the ordinary intelligent pillion-rider to-day. With the help of a slide-rule and the use of the back (always freely lent in a modern self-governing community) of the driver of the cycle, anyone on a pillion to-day can work out a problem that would have utterly baffled the Greeks in a few minutes, perhaps while travelling from one suburb to another in order to speak on behalf of a Labour Candidate for the Borough Council.

The Greek in the figure holds in his right hand the staff with which he draws his lines in the sand. He would not have understood the possibility of drawing lines while travelling at a high speed on the back of a motor-cycle, because it is difficult or impossible to carry from place to place a large enough expanse of sand on which to draw.

You can check this yourself with simple apparatus. Get some ordinary sand and try to carry it from place to place on an ordinary motor-cycle. Try to draw on it, while you travel, with an ordinary stick. The mathematical way of expressing the result is

$$(\text{NBG})^n$$

It is possible to translate this piece of number language in several different ways. One is "*Take* a lot of trouble *to get* nowhere."

The sand can be taken out of the engine afterwards by an ordinary garage-hand. Make sure he is a union man.

The Greek geometers never travelled fast enough to have understood that joke, familiar to all of us to-day, about the milestones which looked like a graveyard. Present-day motor-cyclists might quite often be under the impression, outside a built-up area, that they were passing some cemetery full of the prematurely deceased victims of our industrial system. Fig. 2 explains this fact in simple

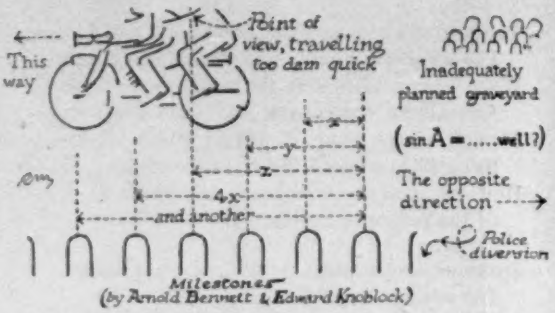


Fig. 2.

diagrammatic form. No Greeks are shown in the figure, because they would seem out of place in it. There are many other things not shown in the figure, including the advantages of an enlightened democracy over a cloudy-minded despotism, but even so I have got a lot more into it than there was room for. (Check this yourself.)

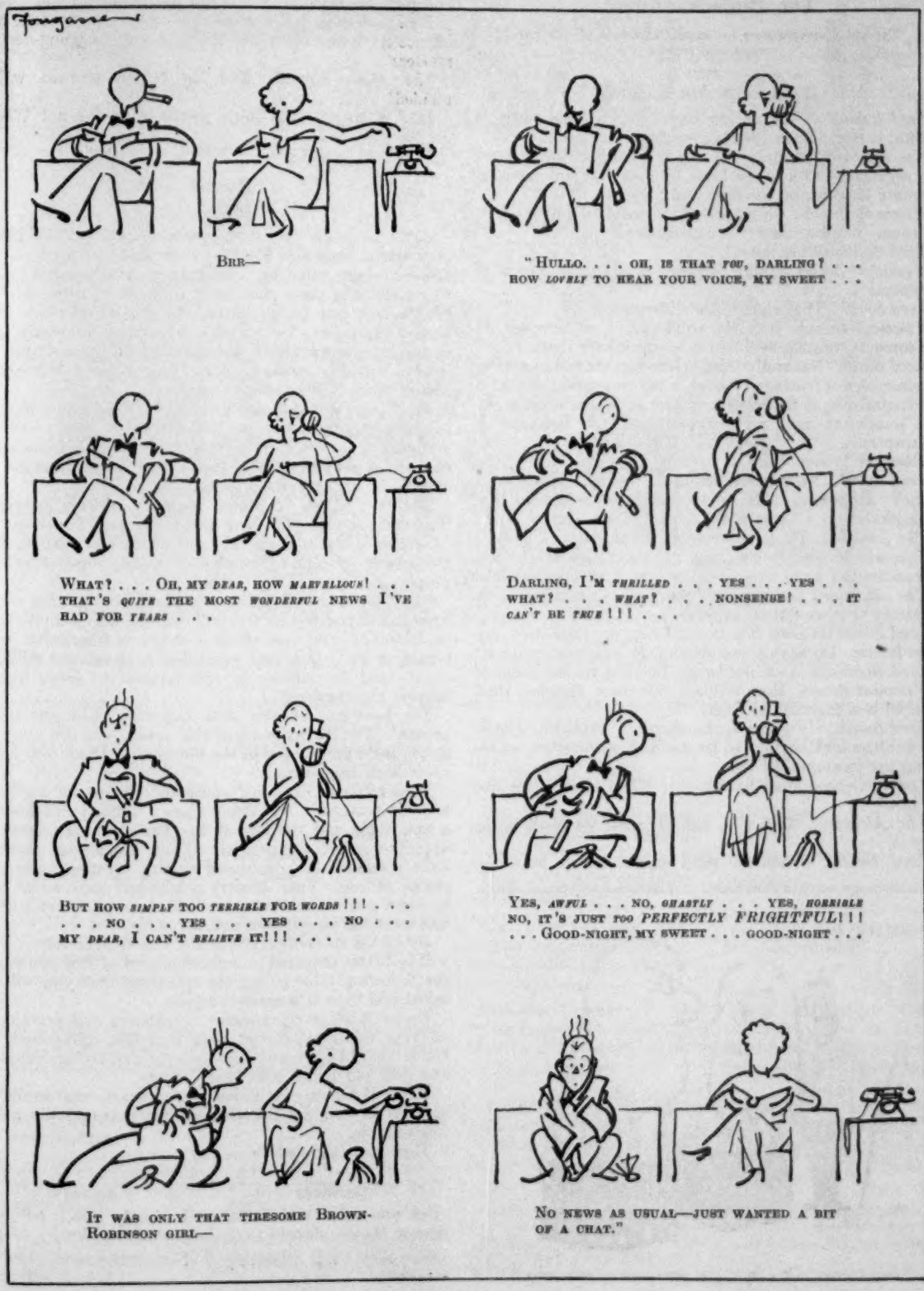
Where the Pillion-Rider Scores.

It is particularly easy for the pillion-rider, with his point of view moving rapidly as shown in Fig. 2, to realise the position in its social context of all his mathematical knowledge. It was all very well for an ancient mathematician, with his customary disregard for plain facts, to work out just for the love of it a method of proving that the angles of a triangle are together equal to two right angles (180°); the practical hard-headed people who ride on pillions to-day work out such things for a definite purpose. They know they must be able to prove that and other propositions, because if they are not they will assuredly fail in their examinations for Municipal Sanitary Inspector at the winter and summer solstices.

As for the celebrated proof that 1 equals 2 (let x equal y; then $x^2 = xy = y^2$; then $x^2 - xy = x^2 - y^2$; then $x(x-y) = (x+y)(x-y)$; then $x = x+y$ or $1 = 2$), which has puzzled the simple-minded dabbler in pure mathematics for centuries, we are able to see through it in an instant by making clear its practical application. We have only to call x "wages" and y "normal rate of profit" and our equation represents the cost of living, or how to wrap a pint-pot round a quart.

Again, it is difficult for the practical pillion-rider, rushing hither and thither, to take any interest in such an abstract curiosity as this sentence in number language: $(x+y)(x-y) = x^2 - y^2$. But when he considers that such an expression enables him to work out the amount of petrol that will leak out on to his trousers between the time he leaves the municipal car-park and the time he enters the next built-up area, the symbols become irradiated with romance and his attitude to mathematics is never the same again.

(Exercises.—There is no room for these. They all deal with subjects that people tired of x and y will find profoundly interesting, such as the way to find the height of the sun at the equinox above the dreaming spires of the technical institute, how to work out fractions of the fare to the U.S.S.R., and how much must be paid in arrears by a householder who has not in the last four years stamped an insurance-card for a man he employs to fight off summonses for non-payment of rates.) R. M.


Tongarse
BRR—
"HULLO. . . . OH, IS THAT YOU, DARLING? . . . HOW LOVELY TO HEAR YOUR VOICE, MY SWEET . . .
WHAT? . . . OH, MY DEAR, HOW MARVELLOUS! . . . THAT'S QUITE THE MOST WONDERFUL NEWS I'VE HAD FOR YEARS . . .
DARLING, I'M THRILLED . . . YES . . . YES . . . WHAT? . . . WHAT? . . . NONSENSE! . . . IT CAN'T BE TRUE!!! . . .
BUT HOW SIMPLY TOO TERRIBLE FOR WORDS!!! . . . . . . NO . . . YES . . . YES . . . NO . . . MY DEAR, I CAN'T BELIEVE IT!!! . . .
YES, AWFUL . . . NO, GHASTLY . . . YES, HORRIBLE NO, IT'S JUST TOO PERFECTLY FRIGHTFUL!!! . . . GOOD-NIGHT, MY SWEET . . . GOOD-NIGHT . . .
IT WAS ONLY THAT TIRESOME BROWN-ROBINSON GIRL—
NO NEWS AS USUAL—JUST WANTED A BIT OF A CHAT."

The Britisch Empire

Typical conversations for nordic students of britisch ways and means

II.—In the Air Machine

Lord Robinson. We are on high. Down below there is Afrika, partly. Soon the Empire shall be beneath.

The Airsman. Milords, it is my intention to bring down the apparatus to a lower level, so that you may have an intimate look-out on the flora and fauna.

Viscount Brown. Oh yes! Perhaps we shall notice a leon or leoness helping itself to a cameleopard.

Lord Smith. What sport!

Viscount Brown. Take a peep! There is a bunch of elephants.

Lord Smith. They dart about differently.

Viscount Brown. It is the wind-up. They suppose we are some overgrown fowl which is angry with them.

Lord Smith. Naturally from belowsides we would appear as some sort of feathered friend, a big one; and the row of the engineering is not re-assuring for such creatures, which are somewhat not sophisticated and are innocent of contraptions.

Viscount Brown. Very.

Lord Smith. Now which are those beasts? Antelopers? Knus? Honestly, this is so good as going to the zoologikals!

The Airsman. Those, milord, are the zebru.

Viscount Brown. Be anxious, my good man, about not descending! I have no wish to mix with strange animals.

The Airsman. Do not worry, milord, I shall see to it zealously that we remain highly.

Lord Smith (to Lord Robinson). I say, my dear chap, my good fellow. Do have a look-down! It is all most unusual!

Lord Robinson. I am not agog. It is not yet the Empire!

Viscount Brown. How William, Viscount Higgins, shall wish he was together with us!

Lord Smith. My guess is, he shivers. Probably also is he 'flubitten. How nice to be not in London town, where germs are in ambusch!

Lord Robinson (looking down). When shall it be the Empire?

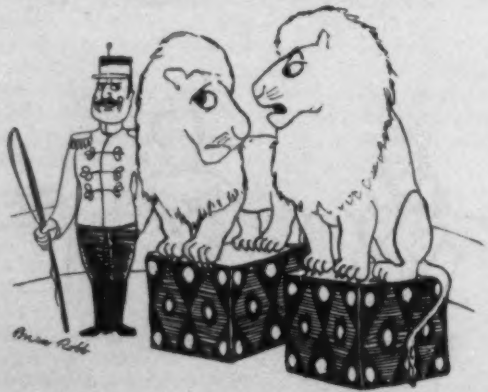
The Airsman. Patience, milord, soon we shall hover over it.

Lord Smith. When we shall arrive, let us hope the Kolonials shall receive us handsomely! Things here are not quite the same as in dear old the Britisch Isles.

Lord Robinson. We must be alert not to take an offence if we encounter not the best way of going-about-matters.

The Others. Agreed. The tip is, be ever so wide-minded!

Lord Robinson. And fairly gentle with the not White people.



"The secret is to look him straight in the eyes."

Russia

Gaul, as you know, already was definitely divided into three parts. And now England is divided into three parts: those who are going to Russia, those who are not going to Russia, and those who have come back from Russia. Whichever group (not counting the Oxford one) you may belong to, it will be to your advantage to study the following conversational technique which is now just as essential socially as the Hay diet, or "When The Poppies Bloom Again," or anything else.

There is no real absence of straightforwardness in having two totally different sets of reactions about Russia—which you will refer to either as The Russian Experiment, in a very eager intelligent tone, or as Those Wretched Bolsheviks, in accents of contemptuous horror.

The fact is, as you have probably already grasped, that there is *no middle way* about Russia. You *must* be violent one way or the other; and which way—let us face them both—will probably almost entirely depend on the people to whom you are talking.

(Conversation is like that, and there's no getting away from it. If you try to, you will only develop a repression, an inhibition, and very likely a couple of inferiority complexes as well. Ask any psychologist—there are millions about—and be sufficiently well advised to leave before hearing the answer.)

You have not by this time forgotten about the three groups? For the purposes of this article you are yourself in the third group, well in the forefront of those who have come back from Russia.

Your relations have told you about the cat having been lost for two days, and Aunt Clara's difficulty in finding a new cook, and the fuss at the Parish Council meeting over the school playground. Your Bloomsbury friends have screamed and screamed again, directing cigarette-smoke at you. Your country neighbours have asked you to come and see the bulbs and tell them all about Russia and meet the new Rector and his wife.

By all the rules of civilisation it is now your turn. You will be better prepared to make the most of it if you study the following table giving the questions that you will be asked and their (alternative) replies.

Under A place the country neighbours and practically all your relations—except poor Rudolph, *again* back on Uncle Eric's hands, and this time they're trying Kenya—and dear old Ethel, who never counts.

Under B collect your Bloomsbury friends—and doubtless enemies as well, for the dividing line is practically indistinguishable.

Then go straight ahead.

A

Questions	*Answers*
Did you have a dreadful time in Russia, dear?	I simply can't *tell* you what it was like.
Are they still shooting everyone?	Not all the time.



"WHY NOT WEAR YOUR FASCIST UNIFORM, WALTER? THEY COULDN'T SAY ANYTHING AS IT 'S FANCY-DRESS."

Questions	*Answers*
Ah! they don't let one see what's happening, I believe. I suppose you were never left alone, were you?	Not for a second, day or night.
Did you by any chance meet the Dorsetshire Pennyways? They went to Moscow.	That was in May, and I was there in June. *They'd disappeared.*
And is it all true about no unemployment, and no wedding-rings, and no shops, and no tips, and fleas everywhere?	Oh, absolutely true—every single word of it.
Have another cup of tea, dear; you must need it, I'm sure, after that terrible country.	Thank you. Two lumps, please. Sugar is quite unobtainable in Russia.
I suppose they all live just like wild beasts?	Oh, exactly.
I hope, dear, that you 'll tell *everybody* what Communism really means.	Yes, indeed. I'm planning a sherry-party next week.

A, you will perceive, is a comparatively moderate affair. You will find B more *staccato* in *tempo*, the *intelligentsia* being like that-O.

B

Questions	*Answers*
I suppose Russia was heaven?	My dear, I can't *tell you.*
They've abolished every single *bourgeois* convention, haven't they?	Absolutely.
Didn't you *adore* the proletariat everywhere?	Utterly.
And they've done away with all our capitalistic horrors, like marriage and property and things?	My dear, *too* completely. It's marvellous.
You simply *must* get hold of the People who Count and start a Communist movement or something.	Quite absolutely. Come and have coffee on Saturday night; I believe I could get hold of a couple of men.

So far as Russia is concerned you have now played your part, and however much you may want to go on talking about it there is very little chance of your finding anybody to listen to you.

E. M. D.

"Superintendent —— said to me yesterday: 'The man who wore it would be 5 ft. 7 in., but possibly just a shade broader across the shoulders.' He would have been conspicuous for his tattered appearance."—*Daily Paper.*

Nothing else?

Advice to Young Authors—or Not

From the Letters of A. Wouldrite

To the Editor "Brightbits" Magazine, Fleet Street, E.C.4.

August 3rd, 1936.

DEAR SIR,—Whilst travelling to Brighton recently with my Aunt Tabitha I purchased a copy of your magazine, and I feel I must write to you and say how much I—and Aunt Tabitha—enjoyed it. The articles are superb, and the stories so marvellously entertaining. I—and Aunt Tabitha—laughed and laughed and laughed all the way to Brighton.

I have also written a story, which all my friends have read, and the Vicar says it is funnier than the stories in your magazine. Mrs. Wopsley-Sugarloaf, who is a great friend of Aunt Tabitha, nearly had hysterics when I explained the story to her. Will you please endeavour to print the story in the next month's issue?

Yours faithfully,

A. WOULDRITE.

P.S.—I have ordered TEN copies of the next issue.

To the Editor "Brightbits" Magazine, Fleet Street, E.C.4.

August 7th, 1936.

PERSONAL

DEAR SIR,—I have reason to believe that my letter and enclosure of August 3rd has not been seen by you, for the screamingly funny story I sent you on that date has been returned to me, by some subordinate of yours (I presume). I now enclose a copy of the letter dated August 3rd, also the story, and please note that the smudges thereon were done by somebody at your office. Aunt Tabitha says she is *sure* that the story has not been read by you, because its publication would increase your circulation a great deal. (Please see *P.S.* to my letter of August 3rd.)

Kindly oblige by letting me have your decision—and cheque—as soon as possible.

Yours faithfully,

A. WOULDRITE.

To the Editor, "Brightbits" Magazine, Fleet Street, E.C.4.

August 14th, 1936.

DEAR SIR,—My story has been returned again with one of the corners on page 4 torn off. Will you please reprimand the individual who is responsible for this?

I am sure that you will be interested to know that we have discovered that your second cousin, Mrs. Mopley-Skeffington-Jones, was at school with my aunt, Lady Smyth Smith Smyth. I am sending another copy of my story to her and informing her that her old school-friend's cousin will be printing it.

With reference to my postscript in my letter of August 3rd, I have now increased my order from ten to eleven copies of your magazine. I am sure you will be pleased to learn this.

You will note that I have now re-written the whole of page 4 in my own hand-writing, and, although it may be a little difficult to read, it is not like reading a doctor's prescription.

Yours faithfully,

A. WOULDRITE.

To the Editor "Brightbits" Magazine, Fleet Street, E.C.4.

August 22nd, 1936.

DEAR SIR,—I beg to inform you that you have again returned my humorous story, and also that I telephoned you twice to-day but I was informed you were out both times. How can you expect to manage a magazine properly and efficiently if you are always out?

I regret too to have to tell you that the whole of the back-page of the story is missing, and page 2 has a big blot on it.

Now, Sir, the crux of the matter is this: I suspected my story had not received the attention that it merited and I gummed pages 3 and 4 together. Pages 3 and 4 are *still gummed together!* Can you account for that?

My Aunt Tabitha is most distressed about it, and she will write to your cousin, Mrs. Mopley-Skeffington-Jones about the matter.

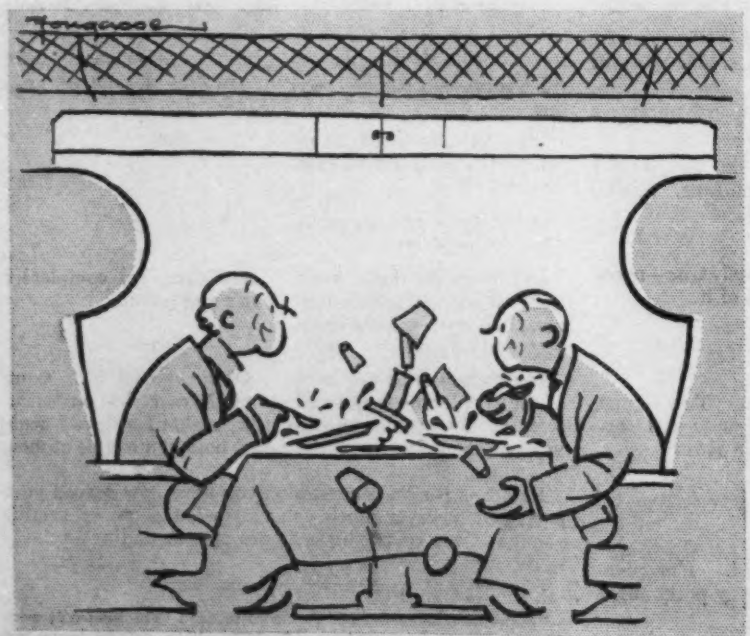
It is quite evident that your magazine department is not working as smoothly as it should, and you should investigate this at once.

I am not enclosing my story again, as I now propose submitting it to what is in my opinion a more humorous and better organised journal.

Yours faithfully,

A. WOULDRITE.

P.S.—I have cancelled my order for eleven copies of the next issue of your journal.



"I CAN REMEMBER WHEN THIS TRAIN WAS SO HORRIBLY SLOW THAT YOU COULD EAT YOUR MEAL IN COMFORT."

-yping Wi-hou- "-'s"

-HE -rouble wi-h a ba--ered and decrepi- -ypewri-er like mine is -ha--he le--ers -end -o ge- loose and fall righ- off. I am a busy man and have li--le -ime for -inkering abou- wi-h -he

mechanism myself. I could of course go -o -he -ypewri-er bureau and borrow ano-her machine while my own is being repaired; bu- -he neares- -own is five miles away, and -hese -hings -ake -ime. A -housand ma--ers have -o be a--ended -o firs-.

Now -here mus- be lo-s of people in my posi-ion; and I feel i- is up -o us all -o ge- -oge-her and find solu-ions for -his disas-rous problem of -emporary le--erlessness.

You will have no-iced by now -ha- i- is -he le--er "-" -ha- is missing from my own ins-rumen- a- presen-. I wan- my "-"! A- leas- i- has -augh- me some-hing I never realised before: -he vi-al impor-ance of -his le--er -o our mo-her -ongue. I- is used far of-ener -han we suspec-. -he effec- of omi--ing i- is u--erly ludicrous, isn'- i-? For one -hing, i- makes i- seem as if I were -alking some ugly dialec- involving -he cons-an- use of -he glo--al s-op; or as if I were afflic-ed wi-h a clef- pala-e. -he loss of -he le--er "-" would be a ma--er of -he grea-es- gravi-y -o -he English language.

Worse s-ill, -here is no real subs-i-u-e for i- in ei-her wri-ing or speech. A- firs- I -ried -o fill in all -he gaps by using "l's" ins-ead, bu- i- was -oo much of a bore going -hrough -he whole manuscrip- crossing -hem. Besides, lhe effecl was even more ullerly ludicrous lhan before. Now il seemed jusl as if I were complelely inloxicaled or somelhing. For example, lake "Six lhick lhislle slicks," "Brilish Conslilulion" and olher longue-lwislers. Like maslicaling lreacle or loffee and such slicky subslances. Il was lanlalising. Il was preposlerous. I regrelled il billerly. Everylhing I wrole seemed lo be ullered by a Chinaman lrying lo speak English bul being quile unable lo masler our syslem of consonanls. So I re-urned gladly -o my previous me-hod of omi--ing -he blas-ed le--er al- -oge-her. I- was much be--er.

Linguisdically, of course, dhe nearesd consonand do "-" is "d." Dhey are bodh *dendal* sounds, you undersdand. Bud dhe subsdidudion of "d" only resulds in a disagreeably guddural and Deudonic effecd. Id also gives dhe impression dhad one suffers from exdremely acude cadarrh. And id leads do derrible ambiguidy because id is quide impossible do disdinguish bedween dhe words "-o--ering" and "doddering." Dhere is likewise a padhedic ponderosidy aboud every word one udders. For insdance:—

"Come, and drip id as ye go
On dhe lighd fandasdic doe."



"Can you spare me the price of a cocktail, Sir?"

As a wri-er, I am much given -o quo-a-ion. Bu- -his is qui-e ou- of -he ques-ion wi-h my -ypewri-er in i-s presen- condi-ion.

"... And burn- -he -opless -owers
of Ilium."

"Crossing the slripling Lhames al
Bablock-hilhe."

"-ea for -wo and -wo for -ea."

"Dhere ad dhe food of yonder
nodding beech,
Dhad wreadhes ids old fandasdic
roods so high,
His lisdless lengdh ad noodide
would he sdredch."

Bu- wha- is -he use of mul-iplying ins-ances? You cannod fail do observe how compledely id devidalises each poe-ic fragmend. You no-ice how ullerly monslrous -he whole -hing is, par-icularly when dhe dhree alderna- dive aysdems of lellering gel inexlric- ably in-er-wined in one's mind. I- is a -hankless -ask, dampering wi-h dypography.

Yed I dake refuge in -he reflec-ion -ha-, had I had my dypewrider mended a- once, -he fascina-ing possibililies and lhe hidherdo unsus- pecded impor-ance of lhe leller "-" would never have been forced ei-her upon -he public's a--en-ion or upon my own.

A General Exhorts His Men

Non ist genug "Avanti!" shouten,
Man muss den nemico ben clouten.
Io hab viel tausend Kameraden,
Ma, bhoys, don't lead me up den
Garden.
All' opera, die sons von Erin,
Noch einmal to the breach marschieren.
Es lebe Spanien! or again,
Three cheers for Spagna! Viva, Spain!

Boldie at Bay

He had not yet got his climbing muscles, Major Boldie explained, so we left him on the sunny side of a rough châlet for cows while we climbed another half-mile to fresh fields and powder snow. Here, by burrowing deep into the snow with fantastically knotted limbs, spraining my thumb and giving Geoffrey indigestion from a surfeit of snow, we were able to prove conclusively that we had not yet mastered the telemark turn, a point which we had never seriously questioned.

Our return to the base-camp discovered drama developing. Major Boldie had seated himself inside the open doorway, out of the wind but in the sun, gloomily eating a hard-boiled egg. In front of him stood a peasant seemingly with something on his mind. He spoke German rapidly from time to time and gesticulated vaguely in many directions.

"The man's an ass," explained the Major. "I often sit in these places. Doing no harm at all."

Geoffrey drew his attention to a smudgy notice on a board headed Verbot. ". . . *stären des viehs in den stallen ist strenge verboten*," it ended.

"Staring at the cows in their stalls in strictly forbidden," was Geoffrey's rendering of this. "Have you been staring at the cows in their stalls, Major?" he asked sternly.

"It's in his blood," I said. "Vice dies hard. Drugs, women or wine have never gripped him. But show him some cows in a stall to stare at and——"

"There are no cows in here, —— you," said the Major shortly.

Our peasant friend, who had been simmering gently, showed signs of coming to the boil again.

"There are no cows in there, Fritz. *Pas une vache*," Geoffrey soothed him. "An Englishman's word is his bond. If you caught the Major staring, it wasn't at your cows."

"A poor life this if full of care, we have no time to stand and stare," I reminded him.

Round the corner burst a herd of young and skittish cows. With tails up and eyeballs gleaming they rushed for the open door of their snug winter quarters, urged on by the long switches of three diminutive Swiss children. It was all so sudden. One moment we held the centre of an empty stage, the next we were in the front row, thrilled by the turmoil of a crowded scene.

With an oath which was quite new to me Major Boldie leapt to his feet and disappeared into the Stygian gloom of the châlet, beating the horns of the leading lady by a matter of eighteen inches or so. Then for a long minute cow after cow shot through the door, while those within appeared to be galloping gaily round and round. They were young cows, as I said, and full of *joie de vivre*. When the last cow had shot home and some showed signs of looking out again, Fritz let down the door, which moved vertically in grooves. He bolted it and shook his head to himself sadly. Geoffrey and I looked at each other with a wild surmise.

From within the châlet came a steady flow of language from a major, who had never before been closeted in the dark with a herd of cows. And mingling with this limpid stream were the mildly distressed moos of heifers unable to accustom themselves to the idea of wintering with an officer and a gentleman in their midst.

Fritz shrugged his shoulders. He had done his best, he seemed to say, and now it was all over. The Swiss children had faded quietly away. An odd major or two in with the family cows was not really worth troubling about, they felt. At my persuasion Fritz raised the door two feet, but as this attracted the cows to the opening we had to close it again.

The Major meanwhile kept up a running commentary on events within. But reception outside was poor, so that many interesting and original uses of our evergreen English language were lost for all time. We gathered, however, that he had clambered on to a narrow shelf and was making his way round the walls to the door, which he strongly advised me, for my own good, to open for him. I do not quote him verbatim, but no matter. He also mentioned that the cows were blowing on his legs. He didn't call them cows, but that is what he undoubtedly meant.

When he finally reached the door he broke into the terrifying war-dance of the Bula-Bula. Weird sub-human screeches curdled our blood, and he leapt to the ground in a frenzied whirl of awesome attitudes. He was trying to clear a space round the door, he afterwards explained, and in this he was completely successful. There was no division of opinion amongst the cows concerning the unearthly visitor in their midst. Unlike the ranks of Tuscany on a famous occasion, there was no question of those behind crying "Forward!" and those before crying "Back!" With one accord they stampeded from the human firework and bulged the far side of the châlet in their efforts to burst through.

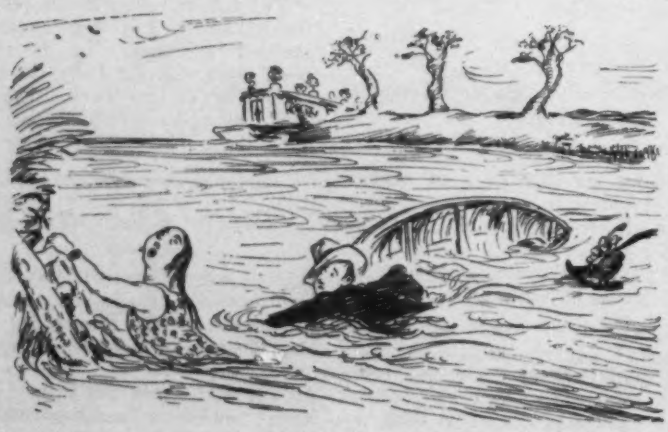
Fritz and I raised the door for the Major to tumble out backwards into the light of day and the range of Geoffrey's camera.

Then there was no doubt that Fritz was very angry. He spoke rapidly and for a long time about the Major's behaviour in the hut, of which he strongly disapproved. Staring at the cows was bad enough, he seemed to say, but what had just transpired was an outrage on man and beast alike. He anticipated nothing but sour milk and deformed calves from that herd next year.

So Major Boldie parted with some francs and spoke a few manly words of regret, first in French and then in what he claimed to be German.

"No spik Engleesh," said Fritz bitterly as he turned away.

J. B. E.



She. "Don't bother about my hat—save yourself."



"*Not* according to Culbertson, I think, Mr. 'Awkins."

Music in the Morning

My friend is an expert in the Art of Getting Up. Having discovered the principle by accident a few years ago, he has elaborated his technique until Getting Up has become one of the major pleasures of his life.

His great idea is, briefly, that the act of wakening should not be rudely forced upon one. The uncompromising alarm, the fatal tattoo at the door—these are too crude. He maintains that one should be gently reconciled to the new day, and that the period "'tween asleep and wake" should be a painless transition during which the spirit is gradually prepared to do its business of forcing the recalcitrant flesh into a cold and hostile world.

His method is quite simple and can be practised by anyone in the privacy of his own home. In the passage outside his bedroom-door is a gramophone. In those uncharted and, as it were, pre-natal hours of the morning when ghostly yodellings break in on the sleeper's dream and servants impose order on the chaos of rooms, his housekeeper puts on a record. The door of his room is shut. The doors of the gramophone are shut. The music, some diaphanous thing by Debussy or Ravel, is first cousin to that described as sweeter than heard melodies; it is music that softlier falls than tired eyelids upon tired eyes. My friend sighs in his slumber and dreams of blue seas washing a sunlit shore.

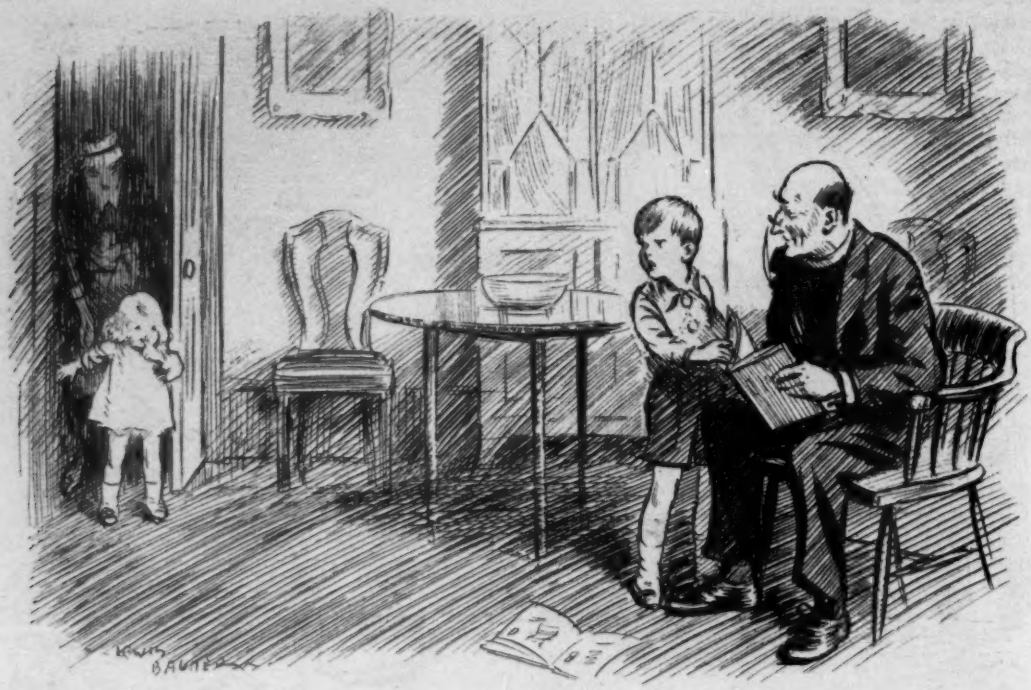
The next record is more assertive. The doors of the gramophone are opened, and my friend's room is alive with the swoop and quiver of strings and the melodious chuckling of the wood-wind. The airy fancies of Mozart and Schubert reach him from some enchanting paradise above the dark underworld he inhabits. He feels himself borne towards the sun and the glad animal cries of the upper world until at last he opens one eye. This he immediately closes, but he is awake.

This period, he asserts, is the most delicious in the whole process. He is aware of his comforts; something of the luminous quality of his dreams is carried over into his waking reflections, and he knows that Getting Up is still remotely situated on the distant horizon of Shaving and Having Breakfast. He dares to explore with his toes the icy expanse that lies outside the sphere of his warmth, he rubs his eyes, yawns, and performs the thousand-and-one little rites which should grace the daily sacrifice of one's felicity.

By the time his bedroom-door has been opened and Wagner's "Ride of the Valkyrie" is hurling through the room like a four-master in a monsoon, my friend is tingling with energy and determination. He lies with muscles ready to spring. The music works up to its terrific climax, the stage is set, and then there is a noise like a hen that has just laid an egg—persistent, maddening, intolerable. He leaps out of bed, guides the needle on to the next groove—and has Got Up.

"To say that the steamer cannot call owing to navigational difficulties is so much bunkum, as we who have been born and bred to the sea could never swallow it."
Dundee Paper.

Don't be proud. Nor could we who haven't.



Small boy (doing the honours to caller). "THIS IS MY SISTER COMING IN, BUT DON'T TAKE ANY NOTICE OF HER—SHE ALWAYS GIGGLES WHEN SHE MEETS MEN."

The Bandstand

Bare Ruined Quires Where Late the Sweet Birds Sang

THE car-park lies in silence and the beach;
The long front, often wet and always windy,
Where sunlit adults yell and infants screech
Lifts to the ear no devastating shindy;
Our band has melted; with the dying summer
It brayed its last and went, a saddening thought,
But not ten trombonists with twenty drummers
Would carry 'gainst our gales, if I know aught.

And see the local bandstand, erst so fair,
Our civic pride when days are full and sunny,
Opened some three years back by our then Mayor
To further music and bring in good money;
The chairs, where audiences reclined enravished,
Lie flattened in a pawlin-shrouded heap,
Not bellying to the wind as when men lavished
Twopence a time thereon and held it cheap.

The silver dome has lost its former sheen,
Those foolish minarets demand regilding,
Though one might criticise its shade of green
A lick of paint would brighten up the building;
Its music mute, it stands aloof and shut up
With one small steeple dolefully aslant;
Its donor, now deceased, would be much cut up
If he observed it; luckily he can't.

Yet though the sun is niggard with his rays,
Though still our winds if anything wax stronger,
It will not long be thus; e'en now the days,
To quote an aunt of mine, are getting longer;
Tenders will pour in, one against the other,
To cheer it with a fresh and livelier smack,
And Mr. Jenkins, whose devoted brother
Adorns the Council, is the man I back.

Then will be doings 'neath that spiky dome;
There will the King of Glory, that vast fiddle,
With all the minor catguts find his home;
There will the oompah grunt, the oboe twiddle.
And, gods, look gently on our coming season,
Bright be the sun, the breezes soft and kind;
You know yourselves it only stands to reason;
If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?

DUM-DUM.

The Reynolds Exhibition

Mr. Punch earnestly advises his readers to visit the admirable collection of over a hundred paintings and drawings by Sir JOSHUA REYNOLDS to be seen at the Loan Exhibition at 45, Park Lane. The Exhibition, which is in aid of the Royal Northern Hospital, is now open and will remain on view (daily, including Sundays, from 11—7) until March 23rd. Admission is 5/-, and particulars of reduced charges for students, etc., can be obtained from the Secretary, 45, Park Lane, W.1.



THE DILEMMA

(After Sir JOSHUA REYNOLDS' well-known picture, "Garrick between Tragedy and Comedy.")

Impressions of Parliament

Synopsis of the Week

***Monday, February 1st.*—Commons: Merchant Shipping Bill given Second Reading.**



A SEA CHANTEY

"You gentlemen of England
That live at home at ease
How little do you think upon
The dangers of the seas."

DR. BURGIN.

***Tuesday, February 2nd.*—Lords: Public Records (Scotland) and Architects Registration Bills given Second Reading.**

***Wednesday, February 3rd.*—Lords: Bundle of minor Bills given Second Reading.**

Commons: Debates on Children's Health and Conditions in Lancashire.

Monday, February 1st.—Mr. EDEN answered a number of questions in the Commons this afternoon. There was nothing the Government would welcome more, he said, than that Germany should participate again in the Disarmament Conference, the bureau of which would hold its next meeting on May 8th; the political tension in Danzig, which had raised extremely complicated issues, was likely to be eased sufficiently for the new High Commissioner to discharge his functions; and the Franco-Turkish settlement of the Alexandretta dispute could be considered eminently satisfactory.

Mr. LOVAT-FRASER'S objection to the taking of finger-prints of child-offenders gave Mr. WILL THORNE the chance to suggest, with a cynical glance along the Conservative benches, that Parliamentary finger-prints also might well be recorded. Even Ministers have something at their fingers-ends.

"The sea that laughs around us
Hath sundered not but bound us,"

wrote the poet SWINBURNE with no idea how it would fit the House to-day, when Dr. BURGIN found the Labour Party fairly sympathetic towards his Bill to provide heavy penalties for the overloading of ships. That punishment by fine and imprisonment was not enough was the view of Mr. BEN SMITH, whose recommendation that cargo should be confiscated as well called up an agreeable picture of half-a-million pounds' worth of tombstones or smoked haddock being reverently deposited on Mr. RUNCIMAN'S doorstep.

The resolution to continue the Tramp Shipping Subsidy was carried after Dr. BURGIN had described the tonic effect it had already produced on the industry.

Tuesday, February 2nd.—It is something of a national occasion when a Government decides that the time has come to implement a promise given by its predecessors six-hundred-and-nine years before. Lord STRATHCONA explained to their Lordships this afternoon that the Treaty of Northumberland, concluded in 1328, provided for the restoration of documents touching the freedom of Scotland and had never been properly discharged, when he moved the Second Reading of the Public Records (Scotland) Bill, which will arrange for the transfer of valuable sheriffs' records to Edinburgh.

With Lord AMULREE'S support, Lord CRAWFORD later got a Second Reading for a Bill to restrict the use of the title "architect" to registered architects, but Lord DUFFERIN for the Government was unable to promise any facilities for the Bill in the Commons. This means that speculative and conscienceless builders will remain free to erect hideous, badly-planned and (mercifully) impermanent houses under the marvellously seductive banner of "architect-planned."



"Behold this land is exceeding good, for surely it floweth with milk—if not with honey."

MR. SHAKESPEARE.

When the Regency Bill was taken in the Commons, its objects were very clearly explained by the HOME SECRETARY. The Regency Bills of the past had applied to particular emergencies, and the Cabinet's proposal, which reflected the wishes of the KING and of his late father, was to establish a permanent machinery which would ensure smooth continuity of government at any time during which the Monarch was unable, either through illness, absence or infancy, to discharge his full functions. The Bill specified the appointment as Regent of whoever stood



"UNITED FRONT": FIRST INNINGS

ALL OUT, 1

Batsman—MR. BUCHANAN
Umpires—MR. GALLACHER AND MR. MAXTON

[The other members of the team were unavoidably prevented from playing.]



"AH! AND SO WOULD *YOU* BE ANNOYED IF YOU HAD THE TROUBLE OF TAKING A RHINOCEROS FOUR HUNDRED MILES ONLY TO BE TOLD BY THE ZOO KEEPER THAT HE MEANT TO SAY *HIPPOPOTAMUS*."

next in the line of succession, provided he was of age and resident in the country; six persons were to form a Council of State; and the Dominions, where executive action was simplified by direct dependence on a Goveror-General, would be free to pass legislation on the subject if and when they saw fit.

For the Labour Party Mr. CLYNES, in a sensible speech, gave the Bill his support, and Sir ARCHIBALD SINCLAIR did the same for the Liberals. But the determined opposition of the I.L.P., forcibly expressed by Mr. MAXTON and Mr. BUCHANAN, who were joined by Mr. GALLACHER, led to a division in which Mr. BUCHANAN found himself alone in the Lobby, the other two having had to act as tellers. Everyone concerned, however, remained exceedingly cheerful.

Wednesday, February 3rd.—There have been many complaints that the stands on the Coronation route have appeared unnecessarily early. The nicest parts of London seem suddenly to have dissolved in tiers. An explanation was given this afternoon by Mr. HUDSON, who told Mr. BROOKE that the work had had to be spread over a long period owing to a shortage of labour and materials, which was already in evidence.

What he described as an eminently modest and practical proposal was then made by Mr. SHINWELL, that, in addition to free milk, at least one meal per day should be given to every child attending an elementary or secondary school. (The cost would only be somewhere about £30,000,000 a year.) He found very objectionable the conditions as to parents' income and children's physique on which free meals were at present provided, and he suggested that a dread of pauperisation ill became Members who were constantly clamouring for industrial subsidies. Miss CAZALET, in moving an amendment recognising that the Government had already done much for children, criticised Mr. SHINWELL's scheme as a great waste of public money, seeing that it made no allowance for parents' incomes or wishes, but she urged that the burden of education authorities in poor districts should be eased; and, although Sir FRANCIS ACLAND stood up for him, Mr. SHINWELL was admirably answered by Mr. SHAKESPEARE, who said that he was unable to remember that the question was ever raised by the Labour Party in 1924, 1929, 1930 or 1931, and gave statistics to show what rapid progress had lately been made towards ensuring the proper nutrition of children. While outlining the Government's activity in this direction he reminded the House that lack of sleep could be nearly as serious to a child as lack of food, and that not every child liked milk. For those who detested it the introduction of an alluring flavour was being considered.



OUR BACK-BENCH *WHO'S WHO*

Before MR. GEORGE HALL
Felt the call
Of the poll,
He helped to lift the face of Old King Coal.

Precautions

I CALLED the other afternoon on my friend Pokewhistle, the artist, who has just removed to a new flat owing to a disagreement with the landlord of his old flat on the subject of bottle-parties. Pokewhistle himself is a quiet scholarly man, but his friends in the mass are inclined to be noisy.

"I moved here," he told me, "because the estate-agents told me that these flats are sound-proof, and though of course they are not sound-proof, the fact that he says they are sound-proof probably means that they are more sound-proof than most flats."

At that moment Mrs. Pokewhistle entered from the kitchen bearing a large and heavy broom and a tin dustpan, accompanied by Augustus Pokewhistle, junior, with a crate of bottles, which appeared to be empty. Young Augustus immediately hurled one of the bottles into the fireplace, where it splintered into a thousand (more or less) fragments. I expected his father to reprove him for this peculiar act, but Pokewhistle simply smiled in a pleased sort of way and whispered something to his wife, who immediately started to bang on the dustpan with the heavy broom. She was still banging when young Augustus hurled a second bottle into the grate.

"Desist," said Pokewhistle at last, "or we shall not hear them knock."

We waited a couple of minutes, and then there came a loud knocking at the door, and Mrs. Pokewhistle admitted a stout red-faced man with an annoyed expression.

"My name is Sturgis," he said, "and I live in the flat immediately below. There is a great deal of noise going on which appears to emanate from this flat."

Pokewhistle chuckled. "It isn't *us*," he said; "there are some men working on the roof, messing about with tiles and gutters. By the way, Mr. Sturgis, what is the number of *your* flat? Twenty-six? Thank you."

Sturgis apologised handsomely and withdrew, and was followed quickly by Miss Gertheimer of Flat 19 and Mr. Percy Pollen of Flat 21. To both of them Pokewhistle explained that the noise was caused by workmen on the roof, and both withdrew with suitable apologies.

"That seems to be all under Schedule A," said Pokewhistle. "We will now proceed to Schedule B."

He disappeared into the kitchen and came back a moment later with a heavy plank of wood, which he proceeded to bang on the floor, while Augustus junior threw bottles into the hearth and Mrs. Pokewhistle resumed her performance on the dustpan. For three minutes the noise was terrific, and then Pokewhistle told them to stop, and they all sat down and waited. This time we received calls from Commodore Funnell of Flat 17, Mrs. Sago-Ricey of Flat 16, and a small and very angry man whose name appeared to be Blastit.

"There are some men on the roof fixing a new chimney," Pokewhistle told them all, after taking their names and addresses, "and I can assure you positively that the noise does not emanate from here."

When they had gone we proceeded to Schedule C, which involved my accompanying the band by hitting a brass tray violently with an old boot. There were six more visitors this time, and Pokewhistle wrote down their names and the numbers of their flats and told them that there were some men on the roof mending the chimney with a road-drill. When they had all gone I asked him what was the purpose of these various schedules.

"It is quite simple," he said; "when I am giving a fairly noisy party I know that I must invite all my neighbours under Schedule A; when I am giving a *very* noisy party I must also invite all my neighbours under Schedule B; and when we intend to really enjoy ourselves I must also include Schedule C."



"REELLY! I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW COSSACKS WORE PYJAMAS."

At the Revue

"HOME AND BEAUTY" (ADELPHI)

WE can always rely upon Mr. CHARLES B. COCHRAN to do things in a big way, and we are not surprised when the curtain rises on his Coronation revue, *Home and Beauty*, at the Adelphi, to find that the home is a super-English home. We can rely on "A. P. H." to see that it will not be an institution. Mulberry Moat has much more than the ordinary amenities of an earl's seat. Its guests for this week-end when we join them almost challenge comparison with the house-party that met in the Ark, and they do not feel any sense of aristocratic constraint. Plenty happens, and there are plenty of rooms for it to happen in. The beauty is laid on with the same generous hand which has built this spacious home. It was a brilliant inspiration which saw how much could be done to illustrate all sides of life in the different rooms of a really large-scale mansion.

The conception has of course its difficulties. The *Earl* and *Countess of Mulberry* (Mr. NORMAN WILLIAMS and Miss NORAH HOWARD) are realistic comedy figures, but their week-end party frequentlycarries them to heights of burlesque. It is only to be expected when Mr. NELSON KEYS and Miss BINNIE HALE are among the guests; but then the *Mulberrys'* week-end party, as they frequently pull themselves together and remember, has also to be linked with the Coronation and the memories of England which their stately home symbolises.

Comedy and patriotic emotion are difficult ingredients to mix in a revue, and Mr. A. P. HERBERT has too fine and sensitive an intelligence to be at ease in these firmly-inserted patriotic moments. The *Earl of Mulberry* has his moments of bathos from which Mr. NORMAN WILLIAMS cannot rescue him. As far as the *Earl* makes any contribution to the action in the revue it is to refuse to return to the ardours of political leadership because he is happier taking his ease in his splendid home. And this self-indulgence is with difficulty dressed up as the higher patriotism of a representative Englishman.



BATH-ROOM OPERATICS

Julika Kadar . . . . . MISS GITTA ALPAR
Rose Mellow. . . . . MISS BINNIE HALE



SOUND SLEEP

Julika Kadar . . . . . MISS GITTA ALPAR
The Earl of Mulberry. . . MR. NORMAN WILLIAMS

There seems to be an unconquerable feeling since the success of *Cavalcade* that it ought not to be difficult to enrich a Coronation revue with a patriotic appeal; but *Home and Beauty* can perfectly well stand for what it is—a very skilful mixture of humour and spectacle, giving a first-rate evening, in particular to the visitors who will be in London in the next few months. It is indeed important, in order to enjoy *Home and Beauty*, that one should approach Mulberry Moat in the author's frame of mind. It cannot stand, as the Communist visitor, *Boris Orloff*, among his many mistakes, declares, as the personification of the England that is, like the giraffe, obviously all wrong but something which cannot be changed.

The great lavish country-house is one of our national institutions which has been almost extinguished in a single generation, so that it now lives chiefly in the pages of comic authors; and it is in the spirit of the comic novel that life at Mulberry Moat can be so thoroughly enjoyed. The son of the house, played by Mr. LESLIE FRENCH, is a young man of wide and deep—though not of enduring—theatrical attachments, and it is partly his fault that rival singers (Miss GITTA ALPAR and Miss BINNIE HALE) pay simultaneous visits and find the ample roof of the Moat too small for the two of them. There is an excellent scene where Miss BINNIE HALE steals and uses her rival's bathroom.

Miss HALE has a very strenuous evening, for she is equally at home below-stairs in the kitchen scenes; while Mr. NELSON KEYS is more than a host in himself, for he is some half-dozen guests. He is particularly entertaining as *Sir*

Lazarus Moon, the richest man in the world, but without braces. Mr. KEYS also crowns the clever dinner-party scene which makes the finale of Part I., making a speech as the excitable raffish *Ambassador*—a speech in which the thought of the encirclement of his country transports him beyond himself, so that he seizes decanters and fruit-dishes in order to demonstrate to the startled company the extreme geographical predicament of his native land.

Mr. HERBERT'S commentary, though cast in this neat week-end form, flings its net widely. The son of the house, living an immensely undisciplined life himself, calls loudly for a new national discipline, and when we go to the nursery and see the ravages of precocious newspaper-reading and advanced literature on the very young and their parents, we understand why. Some chances are missed, it seems to me, when a visit is paid to the estate between church and lunch on Sunday. The unwillingness of the guests to make this ceremonial inspection is the unwillingness of the young but effete people who can hardly last from breakfast to the next meal. The joke of their fatigue could be better divided up if more were made of the farmyard itself. It was a great disappointment to see cardboard animals when human impersonations would have fitted so effectively into the picture. One admirable scene is announced as "The Library," and proves to be wholly devoted to joyless and more or less compulsory bridge.



A "BUNCH" OF KEYS

"A. P. H." has plenty to say in swift verses which are sometimes rather drowned by the massed visual and audial effects. But his words, where they are drenched, take an honourable drenching, for the music of Mr. NILOLAUS BRODSZKY is much superior to the music generally thought fully adequate to spectacular revues. It is "Coronation" music. D. W.

To the Youngest Beater of All

Johnnie M'Crindle, youngest and best of the beaters,
Wearing what used long ago to be one of my suits,
Stoutest of fellows as well as the heartiest of eaters,
Alike undeterred by your size and the weight of your boots—
Though the guns they may miss, though the stops and the keepers may bungle,
Though the undergrowth's over your bonnet and you in the dark,
Nevertheless,
From the darkest recess
Of the jungle,
It's you that says "Mark!"

Often I've watched you, undaunted by bracken or bramble,
Blithely belabouring tree-trunks with whistle and shout
In places where Willie McHaffie or Alastair Campbell
Throw pride to the devil and turn on their heel and come out.
We wouldn't have taken you on were it not for your pleading,
But now that you're here, for the sake of a meal and a bob,
Though your knees and your shins
Are torn with the whins
Till they're bleeding,
You stick to your job.

You never falter; not for a moment you slacken,
Crashing your way through the larches or splashing through bog,
Leaping a burn or a dyke, or rampaging through bracken,
Better by far than a man and as well as a dog.
Worrying through with your shoulders and head like a spaniel,
You emerge from the covert in time for the last of the fun
With a menacing air
Of one who would dare
To be DANIEL
And ESAU in one.

This is the last of the season; to-morrow we scatter,
You to your schooling and I to my troops far from here;
You will be bigger and I just a little bit fatter
When the pheasants and we meet again at the end of the year.
I may put a brave face on the end of my leave, but the fact is
Away in the South I'll be feeling forlorn and bereft:
In my dreams now and then
Send me over the glen,
Just for practice,
A high right and left!

Substitution

It has, in the last few weeks, been very difficult to meet anyone who has not (*a*) himself been a victim to influenza or (*b*) acquainted with victims, often of his own household or office. In fact, unhappily, it has been impossible. But during the recent epidemic which (wood touched) I have so far escaped, I have noticed a departure: more persons than before have told me about the extraordinary abilities suddenly revealed by substitutes; and as the universality of the scourge has made more substitutes necessary, this must be considered a good thing. Compensation. Silver lining.

Cooks, for example. Not only, I gather, can the parlour-maids, housemaids and even nursemaids, and, in one case, a boot-boy, who, as deputy cooks, have been preparing meals, do it so well, but in certain cases they even have done it better and have contrived new dishes.

"You would never have thought," said old G.—"not at least to look at her"—(although into the question of how a cook ought to look I have never gone)—"that our parlourmaid could cook anything, but, believe me, she is a one-er. Take horse-radish, for instance. For years our regular cook, our Emily, has been merely pouring cream over shavings of horse-radish and calling that a sauce fit to take with roast-beef. But the parlour-maid, Elaine, has been making it properly, putting the root through a mincing-machine and mixing it with vinegar and things until it lifts the scalp off your head. As it should, Sir—as it should."

"All very well," said another member, "but horse-radish sauce is an extra, so to speak. Beef can be more than tolerable without it. But what about baked potatoes? Potatoes in their jackets are downright basic food, and yet how seldom you can get them! For many years we have had a cook with no notion how to bake a potato. But when, the other day, she and all the other women got this infernal flu and we had to rely on the boot-boy, potatoes in their jackets suddenly became worth eating. He may not have known much else, but I can tell you this boy knows how to deal with a spud—yes, and how to choose a spud, for that's important too."

"That's odd," said a third member, "but we've had almost exactly the same experience, only in our case it was the kitchen-maid. Everyone had this ghastly malady—cook, parlour-maid, everyone—and there was no one left but this little kitchen-maid, Gladys, to do anything, but, by Jingo! how she did it! Bread-and-butter pudding, now; that's a sweet I'm very partial to, but our regular cook knows nothing about it. Bungles it. Doesn't stone the raisins. But this little thing, almost a child with no training that we'd ever heard of, she could make a bread-and-butter pudding worth talking about."

And so on.

At a tea-party I heard still another version of the benefits that may emerge from disaster. "It's very extraordinary," said one of the fair, "and I should never have believed it possible, but this dreadful plague has introduced me to a new delicacy. I can't remember ever eating anything but hot joints; but the other day, when the kitchen was so upset that we had to do the best we could, a shoulder of mutton made a second appearance. Cold; cold as Greenland. I shuddered at first, of course, and then I was tempted to a slice, and I found it so good that I actually had some more. But just think of it—cold mutton and me! Nothing but influenza could have brought us together."

And clerks. The influenza seems to have been hitting business-firms very badly; but it might have been worse, because underlings have been rising to the occasion like heroes. Quite insignificant fellows too. I have heard about several, youths almost without training who have found themselves momentarily at the head of departments and have done extremely well. Listen to my friend M.: "It's the opportunity, Sir, that makes the man or shows what he is made of. In fact, between you and me—I wouldn't let Jobson know it for the world—between you and me we shouldn't be sorry if Jobson never came back at all. He's sound and steady, and he knows the ropes, and people like him; but this young chap is a marvel."

Of course, when the disease has run its course, the original cooks and clerks and maids and boys will return to their duties and the substitutes will return to theirs; but I have the feeling that some of the employers will wish they wouldn't. There are, of course, many woeful tales of ruined meals, mishandled ledgers and affronted customers, but I seem to have detected a note of wistfulness in too many of the narratives. It is a sad thing when substitution is so successful. Flu, flu, what hast thou done? E. V. L.

A Town-Dweller's Diary

I.

February 10th.—Rich in glowing promise is the month of February. The pulse of nature quickens and, with the exception of one hyacinth mistaken for an onion and fried, the bulbs bought from Peabody the florist and planted in bowls last September are now well on their way. Daffodils show half-an-inch of sturdy growth, hyacinths two inches, and crocuses an inch-and-a-quarter. All shoots are a pleasing vigorous green, and the bowls look charming displayed where they catch the morning sun on the oval mahogany table in the sitting-room window.

For some weeks Peabody has been offering bowls of daffodils, hyacinths, tulips, etc., in flower. Peabody says they sell well—to people who did not plant bulbs in bowls last September, one presumes. Buying from Peabody bowls of bulbs in flower is not of course the same thing as growing them oneself. As Peabody said last September, there is a pleasure in planting and rearing one's own bulbs which cannot be derived from buying them ready-made as it were. Besides, a considerable economy is effected. Very honest of Peabody, though unbusinesslike viewed from a worldly standpoint. Trust Peabody will not suffer financially.

Uncle Sid Silvertop's Adventure

"To the common 'erd," said Mr. Silvertop, "a bathchairman's life may seem a bit 'umdrum. But to them what knows, it's an art, same as most other things. So far as bathchairs is concerned, some blokes is born natural pushers and some is born natural pullers, and when a bloke enters the profeshun 'is first duty to 'imself is to find out which of the two's 'is most 'armonious style.

"Not that either comes easy in an 'urry. Pushing makes a chap feel 'orribly like a nursemaid until 'e gets what you might call 'is promenade-legs, but there's this about pulling, that besides making you feel a bit like an 'orse you very soon gets a twisted neck if you 'appen to 'ave 'ooked up with anything like a chatty client. There was a famous case at Brighton of a bloke 'oose neck got so corkscrewed answering old ladies' questions for twenty years that 'e couldn't see

where 'e was a-going any more and ran 'is old girl into the briny, so the police told 'im 'e must either pull 'is chair backwards in future or chuck up the job, which 'e did, being a shy cuss and 'aving saved a packet.

"Mind you, 'arf the art of a reelly good bathchairman is getting picked by the right client, 'oo's generally somewhere 'arfway between the non-stop tongue-wagger 'oo likes sitting still so 'e can gas more and the gloomy silent sort 'oo makes 'is man go for a reg'lar marathoon so 'e won't 'ave to talk at all."

"You seem to know a lot about it," I said, signalling to the flaxen girl to set about reloading the pewter.

"Small wonder if I do," he replied. "Silvertops 'ave been in and out of bathchairs, as you might say, for generations, and we 'ave a wonderful natural way with 'em in the blood. My Uncle Sid was the last, and 'e shoved 'is old basket round 'Arrogate till 'e was eighty.

"'Ere's 'ealth!

"'E 'ad some times, 'e 'ad! Like most bathchairmen with the job at 'eart 'e used to 'ave 'is reg'lars 'oo 'e wheeled out every day, and one was an old Colonel 'oo 'd overdone what you might call a list to port and fair seized up on the stuff. Except when 'is leg was 'urting 'im 'e was as nice as could be, and 'im and my Uncle Sid got on a treat, both being amachoors of the Turf. Even when the port was 'aving its revenge 'e wasn't too bad; 'e just ses, 'Blast you, Silvertop!' instead of 'Good-morning!' and Uncle Sid knew it was up to 'im to keep 'is trap shut that day.

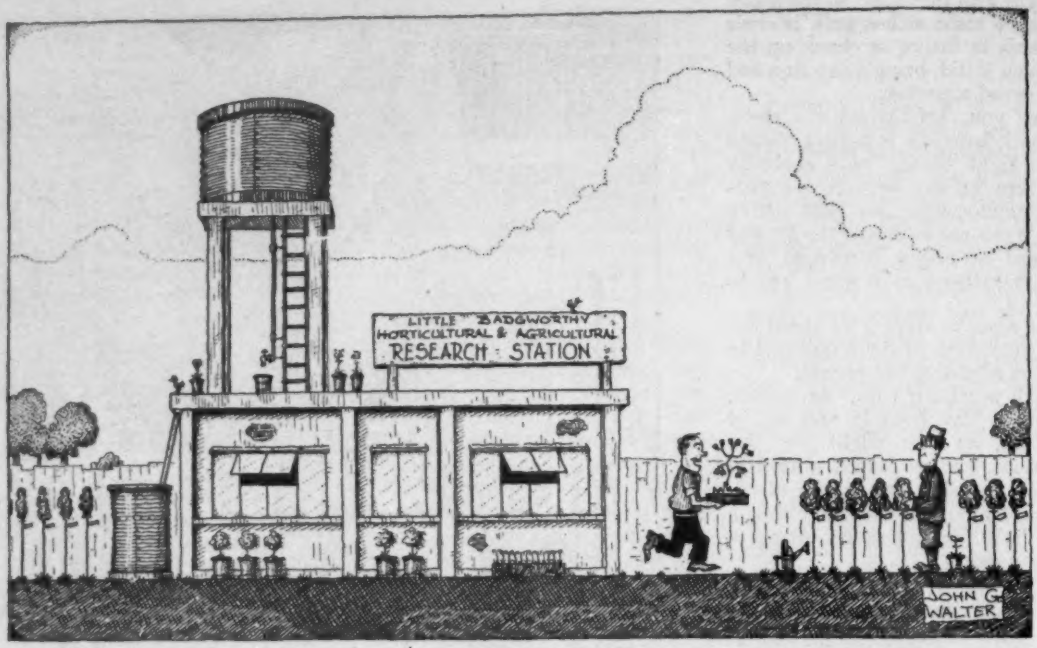
"The only trouble with the old geyser was 'e fancied 'imself something chronic as a lady's man, and in the year 'e'd been at 'Arrogate 'e'd 'ad bath-chair romances with 'arf the old dears in the place. About a week they generally lasted, beginning with a wink while they was being pushed in to knock back the morning can of that there shally-beat and ending with a smile off the ice and a 'Don't stop for the love of Mike, Silvertop!' Well, that sort of thing gets round among old ladies, and you couldn't 'ardly blame 'is cast-offs for getting fair riled with 'is 'igh-'anded ways.

"One morning the Colonel and Uncle Sid was smoking their pipes and going through the Epsom lists for the twentieth time when suddenly ever such a posh chair comes by with a proper fizzer of a little old lady sitting bolt upright in it taking no notice of anybody. She was wearing a veil, she was, but you could see what a pretty dial she 'ad. There was no 'olding the Colonel. 'Come on, Silvertop,' 'e ses. ''Orses be 'anged! No 'orse ever carried itself like she does. After 'er!' And off they goes in pursuit. But the bloke shoving the old lady was a proper 'igh-speed merchant, and after they'd followed 'im about a mile they lost sight of 'im near the Baths. The Colonel 'e very near blew up. 'You've got an 'ell of a nerve, Silvertop,' 'e barks, 'to think I pays you good money to give an imitation of a snail!' 'Never mind, Sir,' ses Uncle Sid, 'we'll catch 'em to-morrow.' 'You'd perishing well better!' growls the Colonel.

"Next morning the same thing 'appened, same place, same time. The Colonel 'ad dolled 'imself up no end and given 'is whiskers an extra twist, and as soon as the old lady 'ove in sight Uncle Sid 'ad 'is basket after 'er like a knife. But it wasn't no good. 'E kept up for near an hour, then 'e lost 'er again down a side-turning. And, believe it or not, that 'appened every morning for a week, till the Colonel was fixed a narsty purple and Uncle Sid was ruddy near all in playing 'Follow my Leader' with eighteen stone of gout in 'is basket. 'Look 'ere,' ses the Colonel at last, 'there's only one thing for it. You must get 'old of 'er man and square



Genial Carpet-layer. "AH! WHAT I CALLS A NICE 'OBBY."



"FAME AT LAST, RIDSDALE! I'VE SUCCEEDED IN PRODUCING A NEW PINEAPPLE PLANT WITH THE FRUIT GROWING ALREADY CUBED."

'im. Find out 'er name and see what a fiver 'll do.'

"Well, Uncle Sid soon runs 'er bloke to earth over 'is old-and-mild, and 'e puts it to 'im straight. ''Oo the 'ell is the old gazebo, and what's 'er game?' 'She's the Countess of Stow-in-the-Wold,' ses the bloke, wiping 'is moustache, 'and she don't fancy being chased by 'arf-a-ton of lumbago.' 'Gout,' ses Uncle Sid quickly, 'aving 'is client's fair name always at 'eart. 'Near enough,' ses the bloke. But Uncle Sid 'ad charm, if ever a man 'ad, and, the bloke being dry after such a morning, by the time they 'ad to leave 'e'd agreed that 'is front-wheel would come off accidental-like next morning in front of the Baths.

"Soon as the Colonel 'eard she was a Countess 'e was more on than ever, and in the morning 'e was spruced up fit to kill. 'E and Uncle Sid tacked on to the others a few 'undred yards from the Baths, as arranged, and as they come up the straight Uncle Sid noticed a little knot of old ladies a-sitting in their chairs outside, gossiping. They was all cast-offs of the Colonel, but 'e thought nothing of it at the time.

"Well, when the Countess's wheel come off she was only about a dozen paces from 'em, so the Colonel 'ad to fair run the gauntlet, as you might say; but 'e 'adn't 'arf a cheek and 'e just pretended 'e 'adn't seen 'em. Uncle Sid wheels 'im up to the Countess instead, 'oo's sitting there like a ruddy ramrod.

"'Excuse me, your Grace,' ses the Colonel, 'but I'm 'eartily distressed to see you in this narsty jam. Will you please me by accepting the loan of my chair to get 'ome in?' The Countess didn't bat an eyelid. 'Deaf,' mutters the Colonel. ''Ere!' 'e roars, a-cupping 'is 'ands at 'er, 'won't you borrow my chair?'

"And what do you think," asked Mr. Silvertop, "'appened then? Corlumme! A second wheel falls off the perishing chair, and 'er Grace is bunged out on 'er napper! Not that it mattered to 'er, for she was one of them wax models out of a milliner's window, as all 'Arrogate could see. But it did to the Colonel. My Uncle Sid ses to 'ear them old cats a-cackling made 'is blood run fair cold." ERIC.

The Bus Ride

"Now here," said Ferdinand, "is a perfectly good scheme which in England would be considered foolish."

Nice is a big town, and Ferdinand had decided that we would take a bus. Lorna and I listened admiringly while he spake yet further, and so did a slowly increasing crowd of Niçois which was gathering at the bus-stop.

"Observe this block of numbered tickets," continued my brother-in-law, indicating a thing like a small calendar which was suspended under a little wooden shelter. "You will notice that the numbers are consecutive. As each intending passenger arrives at the bus-stop he tears off a number, as you see; and a simple mathematical calculation will show that the first-comers get the lowest numbers. There can thus be no dispute as to who is first in the queue."

I began to applaud softly, and so, to Ferdinand's intense annoyance, did several of the crowd.

A bus swirled up. Ferdinand stepped forward bravely into the throng—and stopped with a muttered curse. The bus embarked most of the crowd and moved off.

"It is of course necessary to tear off a number," I pointed out gently.

"In England," said Lorna, "we should simply line up in our savage way and catch the bus."

"Never mind," said Ferdinand, recovering, "we'll get the next."

He tore off a number—94.

"Will that do for all of us?" inquired my wife.

"Certainly," said Ferdinand. "I



"YER GOT TO TAKE WOT 'E TELLS YER WIV A DOSE OF SALTS."

shall simply say, 'Ces peuple sont avec moi.'"

"How lovely!" murmured Lorna.

A bus swirled up. Ferdinand stepped forward bravely into the throng and we followed. People shouted their numbers at the conductor.

"Neuf—neuf——" cried Ferdinand haltingly; then urgently to me: "What the deuce is ninety-four? Quick!"

"Quatre-vingt something," I replied. But it was too late. The bus embarked most of the crowd and moved off.

"Confound it!" muttered Ferdinand. But as he once more tore off a number his brow cleared.

"A hundred!" he cried joyfully. "That's easy. Cent."

"Better practise pronouncing it," advised his sister.

"It sounds like a sore throat at present," I added.

There was a short wait, during which Ferdinand practised and the crowd listened appreciatively.

A bus swirled up. Ferdinand stepped forward bravely into the throng and we followed.

"Cent!" he shouted in assured tones and attempted to climb on to the bus.

"Votre billet, M'sieu?" demanded the conductor politely. Ferdinand faltered. Ferdinand fumbled in his pocket.

"J'ai perdu——" he stammered.

The bus embarked most of the crowd and moved off. Ferdinand reached out to tear off another ticket, but Lorna and I were too quick for him. Seizing an arm each we marched him away towards our destination.

"It is better to travel hopefully than never to arrive," said Lorna.

The Fly in the Orient

"Two or three years back, when at Watford, he dumped three in the net in 2 min. 52 sec. against Clapton Ointment."

Letter to Sunday Paper.



"YOU WILL EXCUSE ME, WON'T YOU, FOR SPEAKING TO A PERFECT STRANGER? BUT WOULD YOU CARE TO FORM A QUEUE WITH ME? IT'S SO MUCH EASIER THAN DOING SO ALONE."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Prelude to Du Maurier

A TWINGE of disappointment that Miss DAPHNE DU MAURIER has chosen to present *The Du Mauriers* (GOLLANCZ, 10/6) instead of *the* DU MAURIER met a well-deserved end before I got halfway through her book. I still think it high time the most exquisite of English illustrators had his biography; but his granddaughter is not perhaps the ideal biographer, though her easy-going animated outlook and manner admirably suit her present theme. This is the family fortunes as they derive from the redoubtable MARY ANNE CLARKE, whose daughter ELLEN—born, alas for romance! before her mother's royal liaison—shared MARY ANNE'S exile in France and married LOUIS-MATHURIN BUSSON DU MAURIER. The destinies of the three children of the marriage and their uncles and aunts exhibit the pathetic fluctuations of all families composed of many drones and only one or two workers. MARY ANNE is soundly displayed as one of the latter. Her ill-gotten gains kept everyone going until "KICKY"—the DU MAURIER of *Punch*—brought pencil and pen to the rescue. The story ends with "KICKY'S" happy marriage; but not before the characters and scenes of *Trilby*, *The Martian* and *Peter Ibbetson* have had time to reassert their unforgettable magic.

Seventy Years On

Mr. LAURENCE HOUSMAN has called his autobiography *The Unexpected Years* (CAPE, 10/6), because in his life "the unexpected has always happened." It has obviously been a very full life, interesting to live and therefore interesting to read about. Few people would agree with all his opinions, but the important thing is that his convictions have been expressed in action, and some of his struggles, such as that against the censorship where he has just scored a signal victory, are exciting reading. His memories of childhood, of commencing artist and author, of work for Women's Suffrage and in the War, are finely told and full of wisdom and humour, and there are many excellent stories. He does not tell us enough of "The Shropshire Lad," but his book will strengthen the portrait of that well-nigh legendary figure which is beginning to assume a touchingly human shape. Mr. HOUSMAN'S photograph as BEACONSFIELD, a wonderful make-up, is the frontispiece, but I should have liked to see many more portraits, and particularly the remembered attractive face of Miss CLEMENCE HOUSMAN, who has obviously in many things played DOROTHY to her brother's WORDSWORTH.

A Tiller on the Tarmac

The arrival of another fantasy from the pen of Mr. ROBERT NATHAN is an occasion for delight. *The Enchanted Voyage* (CONSTABLE, 5/-) is written with the same inspired

frivolity which distinguished *One More Spring*; and although its characters go less profoundly into the deeps of wisdom than was the case there, they are to be forgiven for the excellent reason that often they lack both the time and the breath, as people must who are adrift in a rickety yacht running before a good half-gale down the main road from New York to Florida. The fault lay with *Mrs. Sarah Pecket*. Her cruelty to her meek little husband drove him to erect in the backyard a ship into whose cabin he could creep of an evening and pretend himself a roaring brine-caked skipper, and her cupidity led her to place wheels under her namesake (*Mr. Pecket* had tact) and sell it as a hamburger-stand. The night before the planned abduction *Mr. Pecket* retired below with all sails set and, a storm coming up, awoke to find himself sailing out of the city at an honest four knots. Soon he was joined by a young waitress who signed on as crew on daughterly terms; and when, further south, a *Mr. Williams* and a calf came aboard, the ship's company was complete. Its adventures, always complicated by *Mr. Pecket's* stern discipline and rigid adherence to the nautical code, are told with unfailing humour.

A Loser in Love

An earnest youth foredoomed to fail
  In four successive amorous flings
Appears in MICHAEL SADLEIR'S tale
  (From CONSTABLE), *These Foolish Things*.

Three of the ladies let him down—
  Vamp, wanton, flirt; the fourth, the best,
Cuts loose for fear the world should frown
  And love should fail to stand the test.

Sighs breathe throughout, and I would plead
  That Mr. SADLEIR, if he can,
Should write a further happier screed
  On this dejected nice young man.



"NOW, PLEASS, I TAKE YOU TO THE GREAT BAZAAR WHERE YOU BUY MANY GOOD THING—YES?"
"BEFORE WE GO IN, VICTOR, ASK HIM WHAT CHURCH IT'S IN AID OF?"

Bouquets, Banquets and Bills

The flying of an aeroplane is not difficult. Getting a living by doing so is a stern struggle. This truth is accentuated by the Posthumous Notes and Diaries of the late Sir CHARLES KINGSFORD-SMITH, edited by Commander GEOFFREY RAWSON (R.I.N.), published as *My Flying Life* (ANDREW MELROSE, 16/-). "Stunt" flying round the world means thousands of pounds spent in preparation, and without a millionaire's purse behind him the pilot cannot even break his first record. Sir CHARLES also remarks, "A nation's hero may often become a nation's whipping-boy overnight." Yes, he was often fêted, photographed and cheered to the limit, but Australia did very little to assist her gallant son, financially desperate as he so often was. It was news to me to read that when he wished in 1934 to buy a British machine for the English-Australia Race he could not get a copy of the eventual winner owing to lack of production facilities and he had to buy an American entrant. I hope the situation is better now. This is a cheery, exciting and simple book, written by a very plucky and dogged gentleman who looked on troubles as only fences to be cleared; but one closes it in rather a sad mood—a world-famous airman signing autographs when his bank-manager would hardly let him put his name on a cheque. That is not in the book, but I think it sums up the underlying humour in it.

In and Around the Bull's-eye

The eighteen stories in Miss KAY BOYLE's *The White Horses of Vienna* (FABER AND FABER, 7/6) are not to be pigeon-holed so easily as the publisher's note suggests. It may be right to call "First Offence" and "Astronomer's Wife" "pure comedy," though this does not hint at the depth of the second as compared with the plain fun of the first; but to describe "Dear Mr. Walrus" as "pure tragedy" is to flatter the author. I think "Dear Mr. Walrus" is one of the least effective stories in the book; it is not tragedy at all, it is limelit melodrama creaking with artificiality. Some of the other stories impress me similarly as being elegantly-phrased Grand Guignol. They should be brilliant, subtle and strange, and they seem merely flashy, obscure and distorted. But what is obvious throughout is Miss BOYLE's very great talent, which ensures that when an effect does come off it comes off with a bang. The name-story of the book is a perfect example of the short, clear, comparatively simple tale that has profound implications; and not one of these delicately fantastic stories is without a certain crisp and mannered charm.

A Pioneer

Thirty-six years have passed since the last edition of Mr. EDWARD WHYMPER'S famous book appeared, and now Mr. H. E. G. TYNDALE has revised it and added fresh material from the author's unpublished diaries. There is no need to recommend *Scrambles Among the Alps* (MURRAY, 10/6) to mountaineers or even to those who are interested in mountaineering, so well known are WHYMPER'S feats to all of them. But reason exists for believing that many books which are referred to as "classics" suffer from neglect to-day, and so I venture to assure anyone with a taste for adventure that the story of WHYMPER'S attempts to conquer the Matterhorn is, as Mr. TYNDALE says, "one of the great epics of Alpine history." The original illustrations have been reproduced here—a wise decision, for they give a true impression of early Alpine exploration, and the maps (both in the text and those neatly stowed away at the end of the book) are as they were in the 1900 edition.



"RUN OUT OF JUICE, OLD MAN?"

The Bishop Moves

Perry Mason is at it again. Admirers of this bustling attorney will be glad to hear that he is still pulling fast ones and risking disbarment with unabated enthusiasm, and that his relations with *Della Street* continue to be rather more than friendly. Nor has *Paul Drake*, droll head of the Drake Detective Agency, lost a whit of his swift competence, despite a nasty cold in the head in Chapter IX. In fact *The Case of the Stuttering Bishop* (CASSELLS, 7/6) has all the essential ingredients of a good *Mason* story. The Bishop not only stutters—which in itself is peculiar, for, as *Drake* shrewdly observes, "Bishops don't stutter, Perry"—he has other features of interest. Bishops do not ordinarily get attacked in their hotel bedrooms, disappear inexplicably from ocean liners, and reappear with fractured skulls in receiving hospitals; at any rate not in this country. But the point is: Who killed *Renwold Brownley*? *Julia Branner* probably; or was it the dangerous *Stockton* or the brutal *Sacks*? Or maybe *Philip Brownley*, grandson of the deceased? But not, surely, the stuttering Bishop himself? Well, well. The only thing to do is to buy Mr. ERLE STANLEY GARDNER'S book and find out. It is worth it.

A Fight to a Finish

To those who are looking for adventurous novels in which sound psychology exists but is never allowed to take complete control of the story, Mr. C. S. FORESTER must be a real boon. As evidence of this I have only to mention *The Gun* and *The African Queen*; and *The Happy Return* (MICHAEL JOSEPH, 7/6) is worthy to stand side by side with those noteworthy tales. Dated back to the beginning of last century, when Spain was a power to be reckoned with in the Pacific, this yarn contains as terrific a duel between an English frigate and a Spanish man-o'-war as the lustiest lover of a fight can require. That is the great scene, but it is by no means the only source of interest. The captain of the frigate, beset as he was by innumerable difficulties, is for instance a delightful study of a man who was never quite sure of himself; and so cleverly and so vividly is the ship herself presented that she plays a most important part in these stirring adventures.

Murder Will Out

I have never been a fervent admirer of stories which open with the conviction of pleasant people for grave crimes, since it is as certain as anything can be that joy-bells will be ringing in the ultimate, or possibly the penultimate, chapter. So, when at the outset of *The Case is Closed* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 7/6) I found that *Geoffrey Grey* had been convicted for the murder of his friendly uncle, no anxiety about his future and fate assailed me. Miss PATRICIA WENTWORTH, however, knows all the tricks of her trade, and she never makes a mistake in playing her cards. At one time I thought that she was guilty of revoking, but this was a vain and idle fancy. Readers of sensational fiction, pampered though they are in these days, will find that both her stealthily sinister villain and her industrious investigator play their parts with assurance and ability.

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Charivaria



PSYCHOLOGISTS say that it is perfectly natural for a man to emit a loud cry when he suddenly discovers something that has been hidden from him. This is comforting news for those who have just found pins in their shirt.

* * *

The Home Office is endeavouring to find the most strident type of noise-making machine for giving air-raid warnings. Thousands of citizens have already written recommending their neighbours' radios.

* * *

"Less broadcasting might improve the weather," says a meteorologist. According to one or two critics it might also improve the broadcasting.

* * *

"A good worker derives a great deal of pleasure when he steps back to view the effect of his work," asserts a builder. Unless of course he's a steeplejack.

* * *

Many outstanding historical events have taken place on the Thames, as a writer points out. Oxford's last victory in the Boat-Race occurred there for one.

* * *

According to a news-item a certain outsize citizen of Prague has offered to settle a small fortune on the woman willing to marry him. Now who wants a nice fat Czech?

* * *

A Midlands poulterer has applied to the F.A. to be appointed as a football referee. He claims that he can handle any type of game.

* * *

The introduction of pigs at a New York party proved so popular that it is rumoured that the stunt will be repeated. Pig farmers, however, are reluctant to return the compliment by throwing open their sties to Society.

"Mount the Monument and view the twinkling lights of the West-End," urges a writer. And don't forget how many of these gay twinklings are caused by the hurried shutting and re-opening of night-clubs.

* * *

According to a traffic expert there are too few bridges across the Thames in the London area. We would remind him that the authorities are doing their best at Waterloo.



* * *

One of our scientists declares that it is not really natural for man to sit down. So Underground officials can stop worrying.

* * *

"How often is it that people investigate the source of an escape of gas with a naked flame?" we are asked. Very seldom more than once.

* * *

A wealthy American named BIGORNE is endeavouring to persuade the other members of his family to change their names to Smith. Apparently he just won't let Bigornes be Bigornes.

* * *

A park-keeper has published a pamphlet on the subject of litter. A sort of "Picnic Papers"?

* * *

"The House of Commons never seems to enjoy a boom," we are told. Except when the MINISTER OF LABOUR is up.

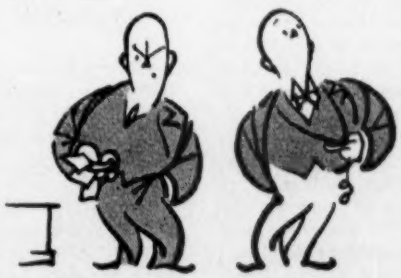
* * *

"Nudist in Slander Suit," shouts a news-bill. But isn't that against the rules?

* * *

A nerve specialist says that when he is confident that he has cured a patient he gives him a shock in order to test the success of the treatment. The shock is of course usually quoted in guineas.





Lullaby

For Aryan Children only

SLEEP, Baby, sleep!
Little lamb of Nazi sheep;
In the state totalitarian
Slumber sweetly, little Aryan.
Sleep, Baby, sleep!

Sleep, Baby, sleep!
Food is dear and slumber cheap;
Fatherland will praise you, sweeting,
If you sleep instead of eating.
Sleep, Baby, sleep!

Sleep, Baby, sleep!
Only little Hebrews weep,
And your pedigree, my child,
Is pure Teuton undefiled.
Sleep, Baby, sleep!

Sleep, Baby, sleep!
Till upon the eastern steep
Climbs our good old German sun,
Showing that the night is done,
Sleep, Baby, sleep!

H. C. B.

Doggerel's Dictionary

II.

ANNUITY.—I have no experience of annuities except to wish I possessed one. This kind of experience I also have indirectly: I know a lot of other people who wish they possessed one. People like this interest me on the whole more than those who actually have an annuity, whether these latter were left their annuity or bought it after seeing it advertised by a picture of some cheerful annuitant enjoying the delights of leisure. Speaking of this man, by the way, he never looks to me as if he were equipped to enjoy the delights of leisure. In all my life I have seen only two people who did look as if they were so equipped: one was the conductor on a country bus in Yorkshire, who wore a uniform coat, grey trousers, brown shoes and spats, and the other was an elderly woman with a moustache who came to try to sell a second-hand electric sewing-machine to a plumber of my acquaintance. This is all I care to reveal on the subject of annuities.

ANTS.—As one of the older-established sluggards of the present generation I have had many opportunities to observe ants. However, I can't say I have been very much interested in the sight. When you've seen one ant you've seen them all, and even if you have seen them all there is still a lot left to live for: Naples, for instance, even if we stick to proverbs. Personally I see no point in continually directing people to ants. There aren't enough communities of ants to go round for one thing, unless you create new ones artificially; and this is tough on the ants, makes them cynical. In the only artificial community of ants I have inspected the inhabitants all looked definitely sullen.

One can of course consider the ways of ants without actually seeking them out. I would do this more often myself, consistent with not allowing the thought to check any particular course of inaction, only in the first place it's hard enough work even to consider the ways of the little beggars, and in the second place when I do manage to get them considered the whole idea depresses me like nobody's business. One way and another I prefer to steer clear of ants.

ANTHOLOGY-POETS.—I have recently found out what is the matter with these. (By "Anthology-Poets" I mean poets who write what LAURA RIDING and ROBERT GRAVES call anthology-poems, poems apparently designed to get into anthologies, or Sunday papers.) The trouble with them is a line from SHAKESPEARE—just one line, that one from *Othello* that we have all misquoted in our time—

"*Keep up your bright swords, for the dew will rust them.*"

That one line is in my opinion the root-cause of the whole anthology situation. They can't forget it, and all they do is keep trying to repeat its effect. Even when they react against it things are just as bad: just a question of substituting for "bright," "swords" and "dew" some such words as "nacreous" or "livid," "cactus" and "wire." The whole present condition of minor poetry can be laid at the door, if you can find the door, of that one line by SHAKESPEARE. Then pull the bell and run before you can be caught by Sir SIDNEY LEE or Sir E. K. CHAMBERS or Mr. THOMAS ("Best Poems of the Year") MOULT.

ANTIPATHY.—I'm not sure what the verb is that goes with antipathy, but whatever it is I can't conjugate it as thoroughly as I should like. I admit that every now and then I take an instant dislike to a girl with a sharp chin, or a man with a tie that looks too big for his collar, or a smooth-haired fox-terrier, or something of that kind. But I never get these all-of-a-sudden convictions of someone's malignity that make life so interesting for people in fiction. I met a man once who looked from a distance as if he might be a real force for evil, and I went nearer in the hope of getting some kind of intuition that he had been doing some murdering, but all I got was a strong smell of seed-cake. This was near the London School of Economics, and it's possible that the smell came from there, but I don't see what that has to do with it. The only other look of genuine obvious malignity that I can remember came to me from the top of a wall near the headquarters of the Artists' Rifles. That one was on a cat and was probably due to indigestion. Even then I took no antipathy to the cat.

ASSOCIATIONS.—There is no point in trying to deal here with this huge subject, whether we mean such associations as all the N.S.'sP.C. to one thing and another, or such associations as cling to a word or an object (*e.g.*, "beer," or a small polished-oak model of a faulty coal-shovel). The importance of associations may be judged as much from the frequent difficulty of employing non-union labour as from the fact that *King Lear* now gets at least one smile SHAKESPEARE never allowed for—when What's-Her-Name says, "Not so hot." Now this state of affairs could be corrected if the present-day audience could swop associations with the audience of the seventeenth century. So could a lot of other things—television, for instance, and the speed limit.

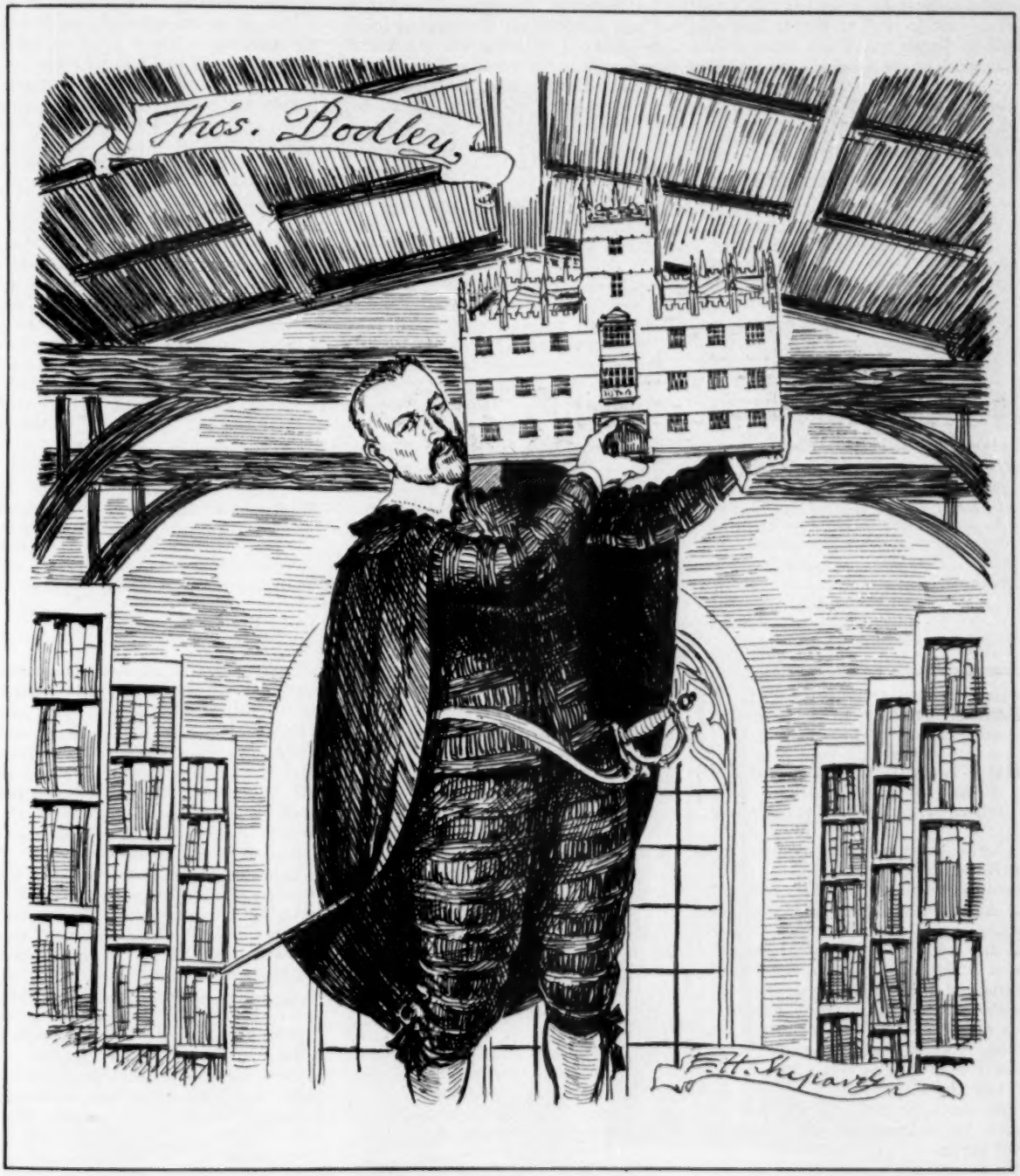
BEER.—Here we have another huge subject with which there is no point in trying to deal here.

(*Literary Executor's Note.*—Nevertheless from the look of the manuscript, which is covered with large brown circles at this point, I should say that my friend did his best.)

R. M.

"Look over the porches, trellises and rustic work in your garden at intervals."—*Garden Chat.*

Our neighbours kindly do this for us.



BODLEY NEEDS

"I GAVE THIS TO OXFORD, BUT IT HAS BECOME A TREASURE-HOUSE FOR THE WORLD."

[Oxford University, in a general appeal for funds, is asking for £250,000 for the extension of the famous Bodleian Library, which was opened in 1603.]



Model Employer. "NOW, BATES, I WANT YOU TO ASCERTAIN THE GENERAL OPINION OF THE FACTORY—GERANIUMS OR ANTIRRHINUMS."

Autobiography of a Wedding Tough

Being the Authoress's life among Fans, 'Graph-hunters, Bobbies, Toe-crunchers, and all that sort of thing.

Lots of people nowadays seem to write about their hard lives: crooks, tramps or hoboes, as they call them in America, and suchlike. Well, I'm going to tell them all they don't begin to know what a tough life is compared to a girl who has been on the wedding game as long as I have; and it's getting harder too. My mother was an old hand and taught me everything I knew, but she wouldn't have stood it now, I'm sure. Why, when I look back and think of the first time she ever took me with her and that we reckoned it a hard day, I just laugh.

It was a Marquis's daughter, I remember, though, oddly enough, I can't recall her name. Mother and I only waited an hour and got so close to the bride that I was able to pull out a pair of nail-scissors I'd hidden in my little muff and snip off a piece of her veil. Mother was mighty pleased at that and said she could see I'd got the hang of the game soon enough. I wonder what she'd think now if she knew that at the Duke of KENT'S wedding I and a girl-friend, who is a fine toe-cruncher, campstooled in by the Abbey at 4.30 P.M. the day before, and then all we got was a cough-lozenge that dropped out of a Foreign Ambassador's pocket.

Mother's gone now. She was game to the last, and only the week before she died was arrested for sticking a hat-pin into a man in front of her while they were outside Daly's Theatre waiting for GERTIE MILLAR to come out. When they let her go she was so weak she could hardly reach home, but she was still clutching a feather she'd torn off GERTIE'S boa all right. She was a great little fan, mother was.

There have been lots of changes since then—film-stars, boxers, more fuss about first-nights and murder-trials and so on. But though I've done pretty well everything—I've even waited forty minutes to see a lot of bishops come out of Westminster Hall—there's no doubt in my mind that weddings are things you get most out of, though you've got to be a real tough and not just a blooming casual to do down the bobbies. They're extra hard on a wedding-crowd, so casuals get had every time, and I often feel kind of sorry for the poor mutts; though of course it's those that make things stiffer for us regulars.

I remember seeing an old girl in the rain at a big St. Paul's, Knightsbridge, wedding once. I could hear her umbrella-ribs just cracking under the pressure all round, and it wasn't long before her hat was off and sticking on to one of the spikes of the railings. She looked pretty ghastly and would have gone down in the mud if I hadn't knuckled a way to the front-row for her. I showed her how to do it, by getting your closed fist, knuckles upwards, just underneath folk's ribs where they feel it most; but she was too old to learn properly, and when the bobby next comes along and shouts "Keep back there!" she says she feels queer and does a bunk before even the bridesmaids arrive. Poor old fool!

You want to start when you're young and strong—say about sixteen or seventeen, like a girl I partnered

up with at the Duke of NORFOLK's wedding the other day. She was a fine kid and will make a fine fan one day when I've educated her a bit. It's useful to have a pal sometimes, as there are a lot of tricks it takes two to bring off, and I showed her one right away. I'd spotted her in the crowd early on looking keen, and when I saw her do one of the best pushing acts I'd ever seen in my career—I'm not exaggerating when I say she'd fought her way through four rows in less than a minute—I smiled and said, "Jolly good!" to her, but at the same time I saw one of the bobbies eyeing her, and I knew by that she was a beginner, 'cos when you're an old hand you learn to get to the front of any crowd without giving yourself away. In fact I've often smiled to see some poor innocent getting cursed when all the time it was I that made the commotion.

But to return to my girl-friend of the other day. We stood and talked a bit, and I was pleased to see she knew as much as I did about the bride's trousseau and the bridesmaids and the wedding plans, so it was obvious she was the real thing, though young; so I decided to take her on as a partner—for the day, anyway. We were in a grand position for the arrivals, and I thrilled my new friend by showing her how to tweak a flower out of a bouquet in one movement and no one the wiser. But I didn't quite fancy our place for the bride and bridegroom leaving the church, so I told her to follow my lead and do just what I said, and started elbowing back two rows. I could see she thought me crazy, but I said, "Just you wait, my dear," and then told her what to do.

We hadn't to wait long before there was a stir and we saw the church-doors opening. "Now," I whispered, at the same time taking out a floured powder-puff and passing it quickly over my face. And that girl was just splendid. "Help!" she cried, loud enough to reach Harrods, "my friend's fainting!" I made as if to droop in her arms then, at the same time kicking upwards at all the ankles within reach—my dear old mother taught me that trick—and in half-a-minute we were outside the crowd and bang in front of the church-steps, just opposite the bride and bridegroom. My friend propped me up, for of course I didn't forget still to look a bit queer, and we just had the front-row of the stalls and I could see every detail of the bride's dress. It was a grand show and I and my partner are working together regular now so as to get well teamed up for the Coronation. M. D.

Generous Measure

HE is too great a man for me,
I cannot love him as I ought,
Although he's sure that we could be
Two minds with but a single thought.
By nature I am not a dove,
So I have put him in his place
By telling him I cannot love
Two chins with but a single face.

"Futurist and Samoht pulled up; Ellen's Garter fell; Tramaway refused."
Racing Results in Sunday Paper.

Honi soit, Tramaway . . .

"Personally, he was a great believer in what other countries were apt to scog at—the public school spirit."—*Report of Speech.*

Let them scog.



"BLOKE SAYS 'E WANTS BANANA FRITTERS."
"WELL, SEE IF THERE'S ANY OF THAT FRIED SOLE WE 'AD ON YESTERDAY AND PUT SOME SUGAR ON IT."

Well Covered

INSPIRED by the enterprise of our contemporaries, some of whom print reports of the Test Matches by three—and even four—accomplished writers, we have determined to "cover" the Law Courts in the same generous manner. Most of our reporters will of course be ex- or "former" judges of the highest legal distinction and literary elegance.

To-day we cover the case of

ENGHEIM *v.* THE MUTTLEBURY CORPORATION

(*Before Mr. Justice Boult*)

Former Lord Chief Justice Plush writes:—

Well, here we are. Court Three welcomes the world again and some of us in the Press benches are itching for a wig.

All standing now. For his Lordship takes the stage. Mr. Justice (Sir Richard) Boult ("Dickie" to one or two of us). Here is the HOBBS of justiciary, the BEETHOVEN of the Bench, fine, free-flowing, fearless—every word a four through the covers, every judgment a symphony of right and reason.

Something of faery has informed the Court as he tucks his robes and takes his seat. We are gay and grateful, because we belong to the Law.

What next? Ha! King's Counsel Sir Ethelred Rutt is up. Here is the *Peter Pan* of the silk-world.* He will never blow up. Smooth, serene, incombustible. There are unseen wings on those broad shoulders and every question is a deadly arrow.

Dickie cocks a shrewd eye at Ethelred, for these two are old lip-mates. Ourselves too have shared many a chop and affidavit with this learned pair. Ah, those were the days!

Ethelred, an we may venture into prophecy, will not waste much wind on the witness. A witless adversary this. Shifty. Unsure of himself. Watch those nervous fingers drumming on the edge of the box. Two quick yorkers and Ethelred will have him.

But as we pen the words the fellow snaps back a quick one. And another. The Court's agog. Dickie chuckles over his notes. Our Ethelred's a-whisper with his instructors. Now the case is anyone's.

Not such a cheap nitwit as we thought, witness Barnes. Character here, conviction, courage. He denies the contract, sniffs at the merger, hits the mortgage out of the ground. Ethelred is in deep water, wading. But he wades grandly—and carefully, Agag-like. Gad, what a duel! This may last out the day.

Nay, Sir. Ethelred has brought up his big guns and Barnes is sunk. The Secretary's letter? No answer to that. The supper-party at Moon's? A dubious mumble. Those right fingers are rapping the box again. Sure sign of nerves, bad conscience, or both.

And now Dickie takes a hand. What a Judge! See him put pen down, adjust wig, pause, push chair back, ordering thought, assembling words. Here is the BASTIN of the Bench, gathering his forces for the shot inescapable.

"But, Mr. Barnes . . .?"

Just that. No more for a terrible moment or two. The case is anyone's no longer. We old hands can see already the plaintiff counting his costs.

"But, Mr. Barnes, the charter-party? And, Mr. Barnes, the draft prospectus?"

Two barrels only—but enough. The bird flops groundward—not a wriggle left in him.

Now Sir Humphrey Codd, for the plaintiff, rises to re-examine. Smart lad, our Humphrey, and does not wear the wig for nothing. BUT HE HAS A TESTING TASK BEFORE HIM, TO PUT A SHINE ON THIS BEDRAGGLED WITNESS. HE WILL TAKE HIS TIME, WE WEEN.

Wrong again. Humphrey has tossed Barnes a couple of easy ones and whisked him out of the box.

New witness. Dickie shifts his chair again and turns a point to starboard. Yes, she's lovely. Hear her take the oath. "The truth, the whole truth, etc. . . ." Never did the old words ring so sweetly. She glances at the Judge. One glance, but it is worth a dozen affidavits. Here is the HELEN WILLS of witnessing. Old Dickie wriggles to starboard again. Ethelred asks her if her name is Peach Martin. She affirms. It is not. Her name is Cleopatra and she rules her Court. Nevertheless Peach Martin will do. "Peach." By gad!

The case is anyone's again.

Mr. Justice Radish (retired) writes:—

There has always hung a spell over Court Three—a sort of mystery, a hint of dew. Perhaps it is not truly a Court at all but one of the Lost Gardens. Some of us can remember the case of *Simpkins* v. *The Amalgamated Bread Company and Others*, when two small fairies emerged from the mouth of a witness and the Judge stopped the case. That was old Marigold (J.) He was an exile from faery, I always thought, with his woodland voice and the threads of gossamer in the eyes. Then there was *Fishmarkets Ltd.* v. *The Mayor of Swindon*, when a rainbow suddenly ringed the Bench and the jury burst into tears. I never felt quite easy sitting in Court Three. The very Clerk had a kind of quality—how shall I put it?—the scent of antiquity, as if at any moment he might call the case of *Bardell* v. *Pickwick*.

And now—even this squalid little bicker between *Engheim* and *The Muttlebury Corporation* has a lurking radiance in the misty morning. Sir Ethelred Rutt, maybe, was one of Arthur's knights, and here he stands again for Right and Justice against this poor stockbroker, the caitiff Barnes. Swish! The great spear is levelled, the chargers meet, a clash, and Barnes is biting the dust. . . .

And here—here comes Guinevere. No, no, her name can *not* be Martin. It cannot be Peach. It is Guinevere. She takes the oath. I cannot bear it. I hide my eyes. . . .

ENGHEIM *v.* THE MUTTLEBURY CORPORATION

(*By our Special Correspondent*)

This case, the hearing of which was continued to-day, raises a question of the true interpretation of sub-paragraph (*b*) of sub-section 3 of section 1 of the Diseased Mortgages Act of 1873.

Mr. Amos Barnes, a stockbroker, denied that he had prepared the draft prospectus referred to on Thursday.

Sir Ethelred Rutt (*for the defendants*). Is your memory good?

Witness. Yes.

Miss Peach Martin, a secretary, was giving evidence when the Court adjourned. A. P. H.

* "Silk," a King's Counsel.—ED.

Fame

IT is always with something of a thrill that I read paragraphs like the following extract from *The Daily Wire* of last Tuesday three-weeks: "Mrs. Christabel Victoria Smith, who died yesterday at her home in Stoke Warmleigh, would have been 102 next month. She boasted that she had never listened to the wireless or travelled in a motor-car."

The thrill comes because in such paragraphs I see my own hope of posthumous fame. Achieving anything likely to be worth three lines in *The*



"We're sunk, me boys—we've been and played the Refreshment Tariff!"

Daily Wire is such extremely hard work that it seems much simpler to be remembered for *not* having done something, and there are still so many things that I have not done that my chance is a good one. A few years ago I made a list of some of the things I might have become famous for not doing, and it was quite a long and noble one. I had not—

Applied for a driving-licence or even driven a car without one;
Learned to dance;
Climbed any sort of mountain;
Crooned;
Appeared in the dock at a police-court;
Worn a pork-pie hat;
Played golf;
Written my *Reminiscences*;
Shaken hands with a Peer;
Had my appendix removed;
Stolen a Belisha Beacon;
Remarked in conversation that it was not so much the cold as the humidity I disliked;
Been thrown out of a public-house;
Worn spats.

And the sad part is that on looking again at the list I find that I have already reduced it by about half. I can now drive a car without an "L" on it, and I have learned to dance. Some of my friends would challenge the last statement, but there is a distinction between having learned to dance and knowing how to dance, and I have certainly learned. I know exactly what my feet are supposed to do, and if they refuse to obey instructions that is neither here nor there. So far I have resisted the temptation to climb any sort of mountain or to croon, though the impulse to croon has sometimes been very difficult to resist, and if I ever climb a mountain I feel certain that I shall croon when I get to the top.

So far I have not appeared in the dock at a police-court, but now that I hold a driving-licence it is only a matter of time, though I hope I shall get the option. The pork-pie hat I have also resisted, though I am almost sure to buy one when I appear in the dock, to give me an innocent expression. Or don't people wear hats in the dock? I play golf (*see* Dancing above), but I have not yet started on my reminiscences, though I am terribly afraid that if I climb a mountain and also appear in the dock I shall feel that I have enough material and start work at once. I have not shaken hands with a Peer, though it was a very near thing. I was at one of those luncheons to a departing Governor of a Dominion, and when I entered and they shouted out my name a Peer was waiting to shake hands with me, but by mistake I rushed past him and shook hands instead with one of the waiters, the terror that always seizes me on these occasions having reduced those present to a mere collection of blurs.

I have been fairly free from chilblains lately, so have not had my appendix removed; nor have I stolen a Belisha Beacon; but I fear I told somebody the other day that it was not so much the cold as the humidity that I disliked; and I am almost certain to be thrown out of the very democratic public-house which I frequent if I go into the bar wearing my new spats.

If I live to be 102 I fear there will be nothing left to die for.

At the Pictures

THE BERGNER AND THE ARTHUR.

IN the early scenes of *Dreaming Lips*, a title which, by the way, has little meaning, ELISABETH BERGNER, or the BERGNER as she is so often called, could hardly be more charming. She has the sparkling eyes and the



TWO SIDES OF A TRIANGLE

Peter . . . . . ROMNEY BRENT
Miguel de Vayo . . RAYMOND MASSEY

caressing voice and the translucent features that her admirers would go far to see again; she has the famous bobbed hair and the brilliant teeth which can listen so expectantly: in fact, everything that we know so well, except the boyishness; for in this play, which purports to be an English version of BERNSTEIN'S *Melo*, she is very woman. But although in these opening scenes she is charming, and the story is made credible, and our hearts are being wrung, suddenly, very near the end, everyone responsible seems to have lost interest, even the photographer, and the tragedy is scamped; so scamped, in fact, that the audience is bewildered, wondering if it is not the dupe of managerial cuts.

The very familiar story is that of an emotional woman who, hearing a violinist in a concerto, instantly falls in love with him, its only novelty being that the woman is herself the wife of a musician. As a rule when Orpheus with his lute exercises these fascinations the prey is either a young girl or is married to a clod. In the present case *Gaby*, or the BERGNER, forfeits *Peter*, her gay and impulsive husband, acted by ROMNEY BRENT, for the maestro, *Miguel de Vayo*, impersonated by RAYMOND MASSEY, who, to the best of my belief, can't play the fiddle at all but is very ingeniously made to appear to do so, his "fingering" being remarkably conscientious. And that is all there is to it: *Miguel* wins; *Peter*, who during an illness becomes capriciously deaf, is forlorn, and *Gaby*, repenting of her infidelity, drowns herself in the Thames; but, as I have said, this dénouement is so sudden that none of us were prepared for it.

I cannot see that *Dreaming Lips* will add any laurel to the BERGNER'S comely brow; but ROMNEY BRENT emerges with new distinction, and if SYDNEY FAIRBROTHER and DONALD CALTHROP had had more than one line each, perhaps they also would have scored.

Whatever desire to be an airman the modern boy may now indulge—and I understand that in his ambition the airman now takes the ancient place of the railway-guard—he would, if he saw *The Plainsman*, very swiftly substitute the movie actor, it being always understood that the movie actor had such opportunities as are enjoyed by GARY COOPER. For the long lithe GARY, with a stride like Fate and a smile as slow as his fingers on the triggers are quick (he has a gun in each hand), has never so revelled in carnage—and carnage justified, carnage blended with the purest of motives. For, at the beginning of the film, do we not see *Abraham Lincoln* himself, with beard and subservient senators all about, and hear him proclaim that the frontier must be made safe for white men? With such authority behind them, every shot of *Wild Bill Hickok* (GARY COOPER) and *Buffalo Bill Cody* (JAMES ELLISON) is a sanction, and we shouldn't mind if a million Indians, instead of only some fifty thousand, bit the dust. But I must confess that the impression I had formed of WILD BILL HICKOK was very different from



Fan at height of fight. "NEVER MIND STOPPING TO DEVELOP THE STORY—KEEP SHOOTIN', OR THE INDIANS 'LL GET YOU!"

Wild Bill Hickok . . . GARY COOPER
Buffalo Bill Cody . . JAMES ELLISON



THE WILD WHIPPING WEST

Calamity Jane. . . . . JEAN ARTHUR

the stately, revengeful and noticeably unwild gentleman whom GARY portrays; and when I saw BUFFALO BILL CODY in real life presiding over his mammoth Show, he differed a good deal from the affable, courteous and even cherubic scourge of the Cheyenne redskins that we behold in this marvellous picture.

But I am omitting the cream of the joke—JEAN ARTHUR as *Calamity Jane*—a swaggering young woman in riding-breeches who in beauty and appearance is sufficiently like the BERGNER to remind us of her, yet is as different from her as the Mississippi as seen in *The Plainsman* is from the Mississippi in boisterous flood as seen in the Newsreels. How *Calamity Jane* came to drive a stage-coach for three days with none of a stage-coach driver's ordinary accessories, there is no need to ask; nor what her past has been, nor what are her present duties: we must take the ARTHUR as she is, and she is a splendid mixture of abuse and cajolery, devotion and defiance, and exceedingly easy to look at. When, however, it comes to acting, probably the best performance in the play is PORTER HALL'S as *Jack McCall*.

E. V. L.



THE BRITISH CHARACTER

APTITUDE FOR BUILDING EMPIRES

The Law of the Bathroom

THIS is the law of the bathroom : con it and give good heed ;
This you must learn and practise ere you're a man indeed.
Prove the unyielding spirit that your virile fathers showed :
Ruthless and unrelenting, keep to the bathroom code !

He who can get there soonest, his shall the bathroom be,
The worm to the early bird is, and the early bird is he;
This have the gods allowed him, challenge the right who durst
(And the law of the bathroom recks not for "Women and children first!").

Shrink from no sharp manœuvre: if you devise a ruse
Lower than others stoop to, that is the one to use.
Unto the strong this battle, the vigilant, swift and sly;
Scruples are for the simple whom the artful dodges by.

If in a sprint you conquer, though by a nose you win,
Leap through the door and slam it; whoever is out, you're in!

Implored, upbraided, threatened, reviled, reproached and cursed,
Sing while you splash; *Væ Victis*—but you are the one in first!

Linked with the law of the bathroom is the law of the waiting queue;
Yield your place for no pleading, though your life's love coaxes you;
Pinch, and without compunction, the place of the ninny who
Waits his turn in his bedroom, as the foolish trustful do!

This is the law of the bathroom ; con it and give good heed ;
Grab your sponge and your towel, reliant on wits and speed.
What though the bath be ready and filled for another man ?
Dart, brave heart, while he dawdles ; capture it if you can !

W. K. H.

More Letters to the Secretary of a Golf Club

From Ephraim Wobblegoose, House-Steward Roughover Golf Club.

29/1/37.

MR. WHELK, DEAR SIR,—Well, Sir, I have taken a fair knock-out with the flu and am in bed along with chronic pains in the legs and all of me in a rare sweat and a high temperature, but sir it will be all right so far as my job is concerned as the wife's brother is stopping with us and he can carry on.

The wife's brother's name is ex-Sergt.-Major John Punkerton and he has just finished with the Army, his service being completed and he is now looking round for a job as House Steward to a Golf Club somewhere, so this will be good experience for a start.

Well sir I think he will do O.K. as he was noted for the discipline he kept amongst his troops and him having a fine sounding voice that carries a long way.

Trusting this will be the goods with you and hoping I wont be long under the Doctor.

yours Sir,
E. WOBBLEGOOSE.

From General Sir Armstrong Forcursue, K.B.E., C.S.I., Captain Roughover Golf Club.

Monday, 1st February, 1937.

DEAR WHELK,—Yes, by all means let Wobblegoose's brother-in-law carry on. I like the look of the fellow's waxed moustache and close-cropped head of hair. Personally I think it will be an excellent thing for the Club to have someone with a military background to knock the place into shape.

I am going to have a long talk to him this evening and tell him how I want things done: more alertness and discipline amongst the staff; also, where possible, the members.

Poor Wobblegoose is really quite hopeless. He couldn't control a flock of chickens.

Yours sincerely,
ARMSTRONG FORCURSUE.

From John Baggs, Caddiemaster Roughover Golf Club.

3rd, Wed.

DEAR SIR,—I am right fed up with the new House Steward who is interfering beyond his station, for he was out this morning at the caddies, and before I could stop him he had lined them up and was drilling them and checking Alf Humpitt for having a broken bootlace and Porker Snoop for sniffing.

And Sir it is none of his business and I told him so but the only reply I got was "Orders is orders and the first duty of the military was to obey."

Well Sir, life is just a bit thick at present, so hoping something can be done, but if not I wish to leave my employ where I have been since 1919.

your obedient servant,
JOHN BAGGS.

From Ignatius Thudd, Club Member Roughover Golf Club.

Thursday, 4th February, 1937.

DEAR SIR,—What in the name of heaven is going on in the Club? The place is becoming more like a barrack-room every day. The chairs in the Reading-Room all in a row, the pens and pencils on the writing-tables dressed shortest on the left, the shoes in the Locker-room lined up as if they were on parade, and what with the new Steward's heel-clicking and about-turning-with-a-stamp, I've had more than enough.

Rearmament and the military viewpoint may be all very well coming from Whitehall, but when you have the thing flung at you by Club servants things are going just a little too far.

Yours faithfully,
I. THUDD.

From Jean Knippey, Waitress, etc., Roughover Golf Club.

6th, Saturday.

DEAR SIR,—I am sorry to trouble you but I am again to give notice and it is over the way I am roared at by Sergeant-Major Punkerton who thinks he knows everything. I am able to stick it when members start saying things about me under their breath, but when this Army Gent (and when all's said and done he's only a staff employee like me) makes me march upstairs in single file a bucket in the left hand and a brush over the right shoulder and makes me mark time and halt and a whole lot of other rigmaroles before he gets me to work scrubbing or sweeping etc. by numbers—well, Sir it's no place for yours truly, me being brought up quiet on a farm.

I am sorry to go Mr. Whelk but needs must when a devil like that drives me.

Yours sincerely,
JEAN KNIPPEY.

P.S.—Excuse me for putting things so blunt but I have been all of a shake thinking about it.



"THIS TIME YOU 'VE FORGOTTEN THE CARD."

Anonymous letter from "Forewarned."

6/2/37.

DEAR SIR,—I am very glad to hear there is to be a golf-kit inspection for members one day soon, because Angus McWhigg has a private cache of whisky in his locker on which he pays no corkage to the Club.

Be on your guard about this, as he is fly enough to remove it, but you will be able to tell by the smell and the old corks he has been up to no good.

The Reverend Cyril Brassie kept a pair of dead pheasants in his locker for eleven days last December.

Yours faithfully,
FOREWARNED.

P.S.—I do wish you would stop General Forcursue from gargling into the wash-hand basins after he comes in from golf. He says it is to avoid Wobblegoose's flu, but my opinion is he does it to annoy his fellow-members.

From General Sir Armstrong Forcursue, K.B.E., C.S.I., Captain Roughover Golf Club.

8th February, 1937.

DEAR WHELK,—So far I am well pleased with the result of Sergeant-Major Punkerton's work in the cause of pulling the Club together; and although Lionel Nutmeg has complained to me that I am going too far in what he calls "militarising Roughover Golf Club," I notice N. now changes his collar every fourth day instead of with his shirt once a fortnight; so some good has presumably been done.

Personally I feel much more can be accomplished, and Admiral Sneyring-Stymie agrees; so I have given instructions to the Greenkeeper that all the groundsmen are to come up to the Club after they knock off every Friday evening for fifteen minutes' drill under Sergeant-Major P. It is absolutely scandalous the way these men *will not* touch their hats to you or call you "Sir" when you pass them on the links.

Why don't you wax your moustache

like Punkerton's? It wouldn't be half so insanitary. It was revolting yesterday, all covered with bits of mince-pie.

Yours sincerely,
ARMSTRONG FORCURSUE.

From Frank Plantain, Greenkeeper Roughover Golf Club.

Wednesday.

DEAR SIR,—About this order of the General's, we shall be there all right. But, Mr. Whelk, I will take no responsibility, for the men have insisted on bringing their tools with them, and David Raikes was sharpening his scythe for over an hour at the dinner interval.

Yours faithfully,
FRANK PLANTAIN.

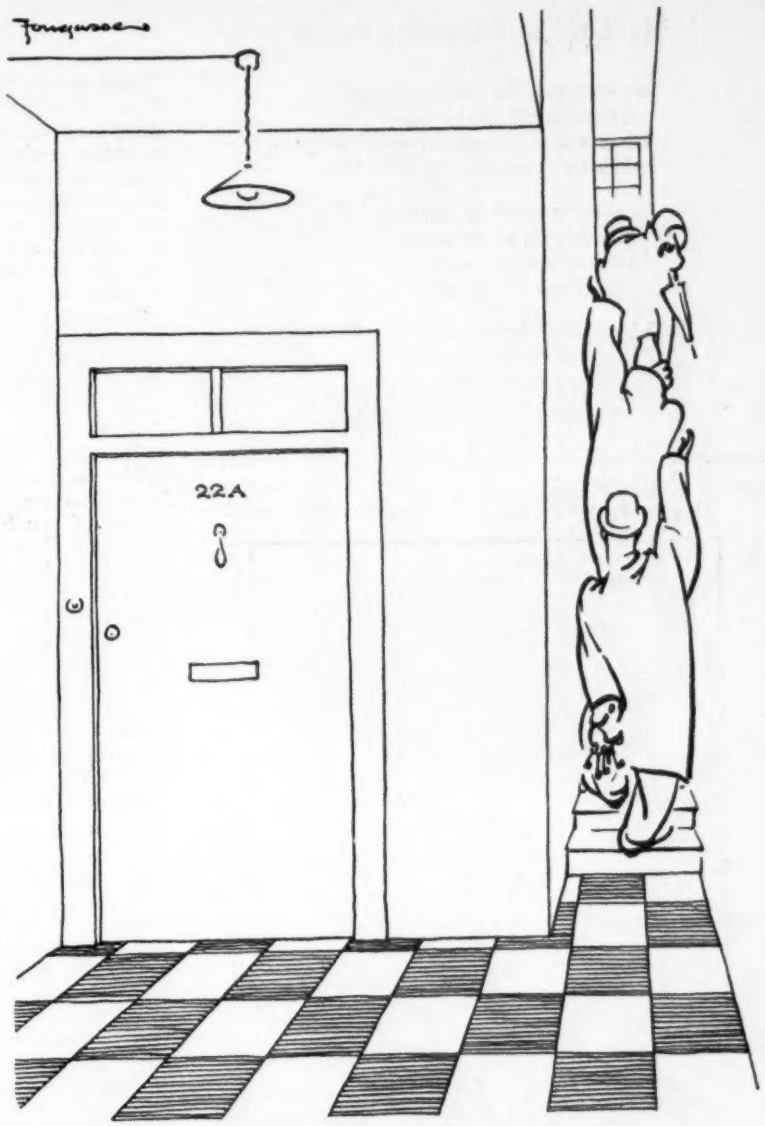
From John Baggs, Caddiemaster Roughover Golf Club. (By hand to the Secretary's residence.)

12th, Friday.

DEAR SIR,—Well Sir I hopes you will forget about my last letter and about leaving the Club for everything is now O.K., for the Sergeant Major has gone and not without a rare flea in his ear from all quarters.

But Sir, you missed a treat from all the accounts I have heard, and it all happened this evening when the Sergeant Major was beginning to drill the groundsmen outside the Reading Room window. For after getting them into two rows he roared out "Staff—Shun!"so loud that General Forcursue who was half dozing in an armchair inside (and likely thinking about the days when he was on the Barrack Square at Putridshindi), jumped out of his chair subconscious like to obey the command. But Sir his tea tray was still on his lap and Sir over it went on to Admiral Sneyring-Stymie's chest —the Admiral being sluggish in his movements and unable to avoid same.

And Sir, what a rare turn up, for the General didn't at first know what had come over him and he thought the Admiral had smacked his face or something; and the Admiral, who had been dozing too, thought the General was paying him back for not standing him a drink after winning their match this A.M., and they had a fine set-to with strong words attached; until suddenly, when another command from the Sergeant Major drifted in from the outside, all became clear. And so they both rushed out and made for the Sergeant Major to give him a proper sorting for messing up their nap. But Sir he was a fly one he was and as soon as he saw their red faces coming at him he took a buck's leap in the air and off down the first fairway like a brassie shot.



"YES, MADAM—OF COURSE THE OTHER HALF OF THE STAIRCASE GOES WITH THE MAISONETTE BELOW."

And Sir what a hue and cry there was, for the General set the groundsmen after him, and away they went waving their rakes and spades at him, and even Jean Knippey throwing her bucket from the upstairs window although he was then four hundred yards away if a day. But Sir I regret to say the man was well trained and fleet of foot and he got away and undamaged for which I am sorry but at any rate he wont be back here again and no mistake.

your obedient servt,
JOHN BAGGS.

From Ephraim Wobblegoose, House-Steward Roughover Golf Club.

12/2/37.

MR. WHELK, DEAR SIR,—You will be glad to hear I am returning to work to-morrow. The wife's brother seemed to leave in a hurry, but the wife says he was always a one to act hasty. A note has just come up from the railway-station asking for his luggage quick, and on it he says he doesn't hold with Military Dictatorships and he is not going to be a Golf Steward after all, but is to keep chickens in Norfolk.

Yours Sir, E. WOBBLEGOOSE.

G. C. N.

My Love at Alexandra Palace

My love was like the nightingale
That singeth to the moon;
There was my heart between his lips
Whene'er my love would croon.

So passing sweet his singing was
His imaged likeness rose,
Apollo in the flashing eye
And Paris in the nose.

I bought a television set
My love to televise:
He has a strange elastic nose
And shifty sort of eyes.



Fougasse

"I NEVER GO TO SEE PERFORMING LIONS—IT SEEMS TO ME SUCH A CRUEL IDEA."
"OH, NO, IT ISN'T, AUNTIE—THEY HARDLY EVER CATCH HIM."

Making the Grade

THE Income-Tax Collector, prop of professional humorists since the days of ARISTOPHANES, has never had cause to complain of a lack of publicity. Statistics are not available as to the number of sketches, essays, articles, diatribes and vignettes, satirical, witty or merely whimsical, which have been written round the person of this tireless public servant; one can only say with certainty that the number is high—so high that any addition to it is to be regarded almost in the light of a national catastrophe. Alas! then that at this moment one can so clearly smell disaster in the air. All the omens are unfavourable. Lightning has been observed in the sky, the statue of CANNING has run blood, a pig with three heads has been born at Market Drayton. It looks horribly as though a fresh spate of Tax Collector fun was about to overwhelm the public.

There is no doubt at all that one more is to be added to the total. This, not to deceive you further, is it.

The cause of all the trouble is a report recently issued by a department of the Institute of Public Administration (of which you have never heard), recommending a new grading of Taxation Officers into five categories. The idea is that the officers are to be divided into classes by their staff superintendents according to their intellectual and temperamental qualifications—the whole with a view to the simplification of promotion. Thus if a man is of "outstanding intelligence," is "Invariably tactful, well-mannered and discreet," "Never loses his temper," and is noticed furthermore to be "Exceptionally keen to tackle difficulties," he goes bang into Class A—and few, with the exception of those in Classes B, C and D, will grudge him the distinction. For those anxious to enter Class E the following appear to be among the desiderata:—

Cumbrous and circuitous in methods;
Inclined to lose temper too frequently;
Selfish in conduct towards others;
Despotic or aggressive.

You see the beauty of the scheme? When candidates for promotion are required the authorities know at once where to look. A man in Class E is definitely less likely to be chosen than his colleague in Class A; in fact one may assume that Class E, for all their aggression, are simply not considered at all. This marks a clear advance on the present system, whereby, though the same man no doubt gets the appointment, he gets it by a slovenly method of selection on his merits instead of stepping into the post almost automatically in virtue of sheer Class A-ishness. As for the ordinary humdrum fellows in Classes B, C and D (who combine outstanding intelligence with a fatal tendency to lose their tempers, or whose unfailing tact and discretion is marred by a certain cumbrousness and circuitousness of method—a fault which few would expect to find in an Income Tax official), they, one must suppose, get the jobs when Class A men are not to be found—surely an enormous step forward in technique?

Only five categories are mentioned in the Report, but there is no reason to fear that the staff superintendents would feel bound to keep strictly within these limits. Special classes would no doubt be created to meet special cases. It would be obviously unfair to associate with your selfish and hot-headed but well-meaning Class E man Collectors with a long record of assaults on taxpayers or given to the scribbling of obscene epithets on Form No. 12A. Hashish-addicts with outstanding ears one would expect to find in Class Z. And of course it goes without saying that



"LISTEN, DEAR. ISN'T THAT FROM 'LOHENGRIN'?"
"NO, SILLY! IT'S FROM DROITWICH."

a man who has reached Class Z will be running a grave risk of dismissal from the service. There is a limit, as we all know, to the allowances which the Inland Revenue Authorities are prepared to make.

Whether this system of grading employees according to their qualifications is an entirely new one in the Civil Service I don't know. Probably not. What I do know is that a very similar system of classification existed at St. Simeon's during my time there. We divided the staff roughly under the following heads:—

GOOD MEN

Men of outstanding athletic ability;
Equable temperaments;
Not too keen on tackling difficulties.

PRETTY DECENT CHAPS

Able to keep order;
Fair anyway;
Not too bad-tempered.

OLD SWOTS

Exceptionally keen on making other people tackle difficulties;
Cumbrous in build (generally);
Definitely despotic.

B.F's.

Whippersnappers;
Poops;
Science Masters;
Derelict old Drawing Masters;
Small Frenchmen.

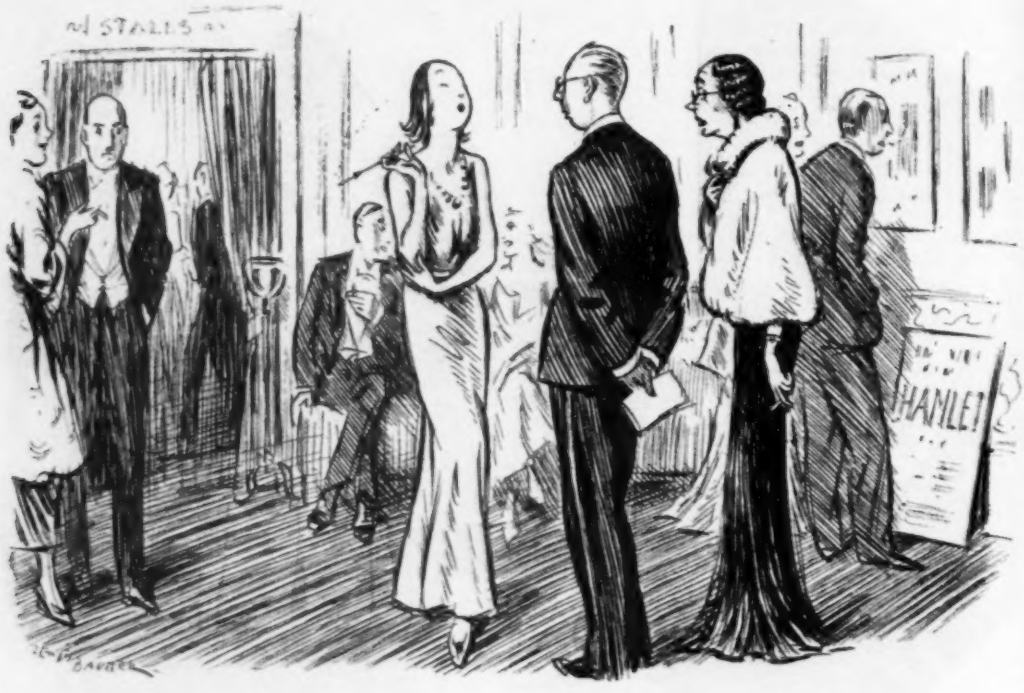
DIRTY RATS (OR STINKERS)

Foul-tempered;
Sarcastic;
Have a lean and hungry look;
Invariably pitch on you personally.

I don't say that these were hard-and-fast categories or even that they were necessarily inclusive. But I do say that they carried a lot more weight than any mere alphabetical classification can. A Class E man may be anything, but a dirty rat is a stinker. H. F. E.

Sad Plight of the Stylish Stout

I WISH I were a handful, a pocketful of fun,
The Pixie type, the BERGNER type,
A-laughing in the sun.
I wish I were a Tinkerbell to storm the heart of man,
A Never-Never girl, a sort of female Peter Pan.
I'd love to be a Plaything, an elfin childish lass,
Instead of which I'm destined to the Large Heroic Class.



Superior Critic. "BUT THEN I ALWAYS FEEL SHAKESPEARE'S HUMOUR IS RATHER EARLY-VICTORIAN."

The Modern A.D.C.

I AM the very pattern of a modern A.D.C.,
There's no one hands the sherry round as gracefully as me.
My manners are impeccable, my dignity is such as is
Supposed to be the perquisite of dowagers and duchesses;
No fashionable popinjay, no sugar-king or banker-chief
Can rival me in tie or tails or buttonhole or handkerchief.
My conversation ranges with authoritative bonhomie
From Problems of the Army to Political Economy.
If stumped, I only murmur, "Well, it wouldn't be discreet to say;"
And if my audience demurs, I answer, "That's for me to say."
The more that I consider it the more it seems to me
I am the very pattern of the modern A.D.C.

I never talk to subalterns or captains—it's undignified;
I never talk to anyone as if I thought they signified;
I hurry past the smaller fry and only to the big adhere;
I never talk to anyone below the rank of brigadier;
I never ride in uniform; my boots are not intended for
Equestrian exercise at all, but office-work they're splendid for;
I spend manœuvres in a car, for in a limousine it is
Not only much more dignified but nearer one's amenities;
I sleep in village inns, of course; a fellow doesn't care about
A bivouac—it's draughty and it's apt to blow your hair about.
I've thought about it thoroughly; it's obvious to me
I am the very pattern of a modern A.D.C.

In short, when I've descended from the theory to the practical
And learnt the principles of war, strategical and tactical;
When I can march for thirty miles on heather or on tarmac, or
Have learnt to handle a platoon as ably as an Army Corps;
When I have learnt my job a bit, and needn't feel an ass if I
Am given dinners to inspect or riflemen to classify;
When I'm reduced to cadging, or endeavouring to cadge, a tent,
And saying, "Yes, Sir," "No, Sir," "If you please, Sir," to an Adjutant;
When I can do the duties of an ordinary officer
As well as saying, "Sherry?" or, "Some brandy with your coffee, Sir?"
I'll be a soldier then; but now it's quite enough for me
To be the very pattern of a modern A.D.C.



A QUEER FAIRY STORY

OR, THE BABES IN THE WAR-WOOD

[Italian newspapers have charmingly expressed the opinion that the rearmament of Democracies is becoming a menace to the peace-loving Dictators of Europe.]

Impressions of Parliament

Synopsis of the Week

***Monday, February 8th.*—Lords: Formal Sitting.**

Commons: Debate on Physical Training.

***Tuesday, February 9th.*—Lords: Minor Business Transacted.**

Commons: Debate on Reserve Forces.



THE BRITANNIC GAMES

MR. OLIVER STANLEY MAKES A PROMISING START.

***Wednesday, February 10th.*—Lords: Regency Bill given Second Reading.**

Commons: Debate on Preservation of England.

Monday, February 8th.—Question-time was largely taken up to-day by inquiries about foreign propaganda in this country, to which Lord CRANBORNE in his replies remained firmly non-committal. Ever sensitive to Muscovite intrigue, Sir HENRY PAGE CROFT resented the distribution by an Embassy in London of a volume "in connection with a civil war now proceeding," and in some cases with a signed introduction by the Ambassador; and he called the attention of the Foreign Office to the recent breach of diplomatic etiquette committed by an Ambassador who had addressed a political gathering in London. Mr. LENNOX-BOYD's supplementary, asking if it was not only charitable to allow the Soviet Ambassador as much fun as he could have before he became the victim of the next Trotskyist trial aroused the Opposition to fury; but Mr. SPEAKER, appealed to, regretted that it had escaped him.

Mr. BALDWIN scored the biggest laugh of the day when, in answer to Mr. SHINWELL's suggestion that democracy would be better served by a suspension of the creation of titles, he replied that experience went to show that the more democratic the country the longer the Honours Lists.

That the Government's scheme for physical training was quite distinct from any plans to improve nutrition was Mr. OLIVER STANLEY's opening point in asking for a temporary supplementary estimate. He described how a Central Advisory Council would be set up, with Lord ABERDARE as Chairman, which would appoint local committees to examine particular proposals and consider grants; and he explained that the National Physical Training College, to be maintained by the Government, would be for men only, since better opportunities for women students already existed. It was up to this country, in his opinion, to show the authoritarian states that a democracy could also achieve health, but by voluntary methods. (This has already been proved by the Scandinavian countries, as Mr. MAXTON later pointed out.)

In subsequent debate the Scheme met with little sound criticism.

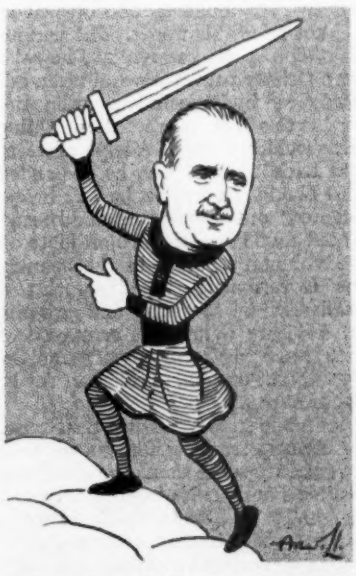
Tuesday, February 9th.—Attempts to discover the exact nature of his discussions with President ROOSEVELT found Mr. RUNCIMAN guarded and almost coy. To Sir PERCY HARRIS's suggestion that no definite purpose had prompted his visit he replied that it had been informal rather than formal, but that further explorations were now proceeding.

There seems to be a general impression outside the House of Commons that "Red Biddy" is the nickname of a lady-Member; but in fact it is a hideous concoction of methylated spirits and the worst red wine. In Glasgow its results are appalling, and several Members would like the Scot-



ARMS AND THE MEN

SIR VICTOR WARRENDER MAKES A PROMISING REPORT.



FOR ENGLAND, HOME AND BEAUTY

MR. BOSSOM SETS OUT TO REPEL THE RAIDS OF THE VANDALS.

tish Office to do something drastic about it. When Mr. DAVIDSON produced a bottle of it Mr. ELLIOT promised to have it analysed.

Another attempt by the Labour Party to get Mr. LENNOX-BOYD into trouble with the SPEAKER for his frivolous reference to the Soviet Ambassador met with no success, the SPEAKER declining to admit any improper interpretation. After all, as Mr. SANDYS pointed out, even conviction by a Russian Court would in no way imply any guilt.

Mr. DUFF COOPER got a Second Reading without much difficulty for his Bill to extend the period of the "A" Reservists from two to five years, although speakers on all sides showed impatience that the War Office had not yet brought forward its promised reforms to deal with the wider questions of recruiting. Labour Members objected that the extra sixpence a day was not enough, and Mr. GALLACHER, who rarely lets us down, asserted that these reservists were not wanted for



Keeper of the Royal Library. "I FEAR, SIRE, WE MUST EITHER ADD A NEW WING OR ASK INDEFATIGABLE AUTHORS TO REDUCE OUTPUT."

public defence but for that of "certain great capitalists."

In winding up, Sir VICTOR WARRENDER was able to announce that the January figures for recruiting showed improvement.

Wednesday, February 10th.—Two peers discovered ingenious objections to the Regency Bill when it was taken in the Lords to-day, and Lord HALIFAX promised to pass these on to the HOME SECRETARY.

Lord DONOUGHMORE saw possible danger in the rigidity with which it was laid down that the next adult in succession to the Throne should act as Regent, and as an example pointed out that, if a Regent had been needed between 1830 and 1837, the Duke of CUMBERLAND would have been appointed by the terms of this Bill and would have been so unpopular a choice, owing to his bitter engagement in party politics, that a revolution might easily have resulted. He suggested that instead the Council of State should have power of selection.

Lord RANKEILLOUR, on the other hand, was concerned lest a future King might be taken prisoner of war, caught out perhaps at some distant spa, a contingency in which he would not at present be enabled to delegate his power to dissolve Parliament.

The Commons enjoyed an excellent debate, deserving of the widest publicity, on the need for more active measures to prevent the ruination of such old buildings and places of national charm as the vandals have left us. Mr. BOSSOM, who opened it, did not mince his words. The various Acts aiming at preservation, he said, were strictly permissive and often administered by impecunious authorities unable to afford compensation. Citing the shocking cases of Adelphi Terrace and Lansdowne House, he demanded that London should not be "Berkeley-Squared" out of existence, and he suggested that in order to co-ordinate all the voluntary bodies in the country the Government should appoint a Parliamentary Secretary and give him an Advisory Committee composed of such men as Sir LAWRENCE CHUBB, Sir GUY DAWBER and Professor A. E. RICHARDSON.

He found support all over the House. Mr. KEELING, asking if it was not time that beauty spots should be scheduled and local authorities legally compelled to employ architects, spoke bitterly, but not too bitterly, of the repulsive ribbon development which has been allowed by the apathy of successive Governments to disfigure our coast-line; if £400,000 could be spent annually on London museums, could something not be spared for rural England? Colonel WEDGWOOD assured the House that any scheme which was not compulsory was utterly valueless for preserving anything; Sir JOHN WITHERS criticised the Government for the bloomer it had nearly committed at Maidenhead; and in the wittiest speech of the day Commander FLETCHER declared that, if the female face was to be taken as the supreme expression of beauty, then there was no doubt that in all public places women worked hard for the preservation of places of charm.

In reply Mr. HUDSON made the customary official comment on this subject, that public opinion must be educated by the voluntary bodies. Perhaps the Ministry of Health will initiate night-classes on æsthetics for jerry-builders!

Fresh Light on the Misty Islands.

"Once he landed in the Hebrides and was greeted by a group of naked savages who had only a few days before eaten the missionary there."—*Article in B.W.I. Paper.*

"It is not improper to say that the Mongols are now really bewildered between the devils of the frying-pan and the deep seas."
Chinese Year Book.

Then what *is* it improper to say?

In the Movement

Based on a recent report by the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research.

WERE you as a man of learning
With all wisdom 'neath your hat,
Skilled in everything concerning
This, as one may say, and that,

Pestered, of your lore, to mention
Of all breathing things the life
Most remote from apprehension,
Toil and trouble, strain and strife,

Would you not, on gazing round you,
Find your confident reply
In the Porker? I'll be bound you
Would, and so in fact would I.

Free from all the cares that cumber
Us, and keep the mind perplext,
All he asks is food and slumber,
First the one and then the next.

Tempted with sustaining washes
How he quaffs them, long and deep,
With what heavy glee he sploshes
Down upon his side to sleep.

Not for him to rise and labour
Stoutly for his wife and brood;
All his duty to his neighbour
Merges in desire for food.

Just to see his ears all soupy
And his smile when in repose
Makes the tired man feel quite loopy
And with reason, goodness knows.

Yet e'en he is in the movement;
Science restlessly reveals
Now, that for his own improvement
He must walk between his meals.

So, whate'er the weather's rigour,
He'll be rootled, henceforth, out
Daily, not to serve his figure,
Though 'twill benefit no doubt,

But for deeper ends and graver;
If I tactfully suggest
That they're thinking of his flavour
You can diagnose the rest.

When one pictures him immensely
Levered up and lugged along
While disliking it intensely,
One might say, they do him wrong;

Yet e'en trouble has its uses;
Grief has joy, if rightly seen;
How 'twill stimulate his juices;
How he'll slumber in between.

DUM-DUM.



"THANKS FRIGHTFULLY."

At the Play

"UNCLE VANYA" (WESTMINSTER)



A CHEERY CHEKHOV GARDEN-PARTY

Ivan (Uncle Vanya) . . MR. HARCOURT WILLIAMS
Mihail . . . . . MR. CECIL TROUNCER
Sonya . . . . . MISS ALEXIS FRANCE
Ilya . . . . . MR. PHILIP GODFREY
Marya . . . . . MISS INEZ BENSUSAN
Yelena . . . . . MISS LYDIA SHERWOOD

Uncle Vanya, at the Westminster Theatre, is a cheerful production of a play that can be produced quite successfully at many different levels of high or low spirits. The high spirits of this new production by Mr. MICHAËL MACOWAN owe a lot to Mr. CECIL TROUNCER, acting the part of *Mihail Lvovitch Astrov*, the Doctor. He is an invigorating figure glowing with health and full of his hobbies, the last person to be encountered in a setting of psychological indecision. He is like a Fellow of a Cambridge college, the kind of man who has science for his work and some form of athletics for his recreation. His good health is at times even a little overpowering and would be incongruous if good health was not a characteristic of all the characters—even of *Alexandr*, a retired professor with the gout (Mr. MARK DIGNAM).

Because we know it is a Russian household, a part of that quiet provincial Russian life which lives on ever in so much prose, we are easily deceived by *Uncle Vanya* and his associates into thinking that they do not know their own minds; but it is very plain that they do. *Alexandr* quite simply cannot stand the neglect and boredom of country retirement, and, like the selfish old man that he is, he resolves to sell the family estate in order to have enough money to live in the town. *Yelena*, his young second wife, is played by Miss LYDIA SHERWOOD. Her decision too is never in doubt. She keeps her marriage vows and makes the best of an obviously foolish marriage. As for *Sonya*, Miss ALEXIS FRANCE plays her in a way that makes us all admire her practical capacity and her self-control. Her feelings are intense but well-mastered, and she accepts the fact of unrequited love like a Stoic. Both women are tempted, and indulge themselves a little in relaxed control, just sufficiently to show us how much they mind but not sufficiently to derange the settled plan of their lives.



SLAVONIC TRAGEDY

Professor Serebryakov . . MR. MARK DIGNAM
Ivan . . . . . MR. HARCOURT WILLIAMS

There are some minor characters, like the attractive *Ilya Ilyitch*, whom the programme describes as "a Landowner reduced to poverty," who have completely settled into their little groove, asking and receiving very little. *Ilya Ilyitch* has his 'cello and is accepted as a member of the household, although the head of the house is hardly aware of his existence and ignores him when it is time to say good-bye.

It is *Uncle Vanya* himself who is filled with vague bitter discontent. Mr. HARCOURT WILLIAMS made him rather like an Irishman of no fixed occupation, and made him perhaps

rather more amusing and rather less poignant than his central position in the action demands. When he endeavours to shoot *Alexandr* in rage at the proposal to sell the estate where he has wasted his life till his forty-seventh year his berserk moments are welcome and have a high note of comedy about them. We leave him at the end, settling down again to the accounts with *Sonya*, while the monotonous life of the estate resumes its course, and neither this stormy emotion nor his sense of frustration have availed anything to deflect his life from its quiet and insufficient course.

The triumph of action has all been with *Alexandr*, the tyrannical old invalid who has not liked the country and has stalked away again. Mr. DIGNAM makes *Alexandr* a singularly realistic and unpleasant head of a house and enables us perfectly to understand that of course *Uncle Vanya* misses him when he shoots him. For the shooting does but crystallise in one action the ineffectiveness that is *Uncle Vanya's* leading characteristic. He has just grievances, but *Alexandr* represents the other type—the man who gets his way. D. W.

"ON YOUR TOES" (PALACE)

If it is very funny or contains enough good light dancing, a musical-comedy comes near to justifying its existence, and if it should satisfy both these requirements at once then it is a good addition to current entertainment. I am sorry to say that this piece fails to satisfy either.

In the first place it suffers badly from the lack of a heavyweight comedian, and not even Mr. LESLIE HENSON's production can make up for this deficiency. There is a good deal of comic talent in the cast, but nobody who can extract anything like sustained laughter. And in the second place, although the lead is taken by that attractive young actor, Mr. JACK WHITING, who has shown signs of being able to dance quite well, only in one scene is he allowed to do much more than warm his toes.

The piece is at a further disadvantage because, having set out with the central object of burlesquing the Russian Ballet, its authors have clearly found difficulty in making up their minds between satire and imitation. The enticement of having some competent ballet-dancers in the cast has been too much for them, and the edge of their irony, never very keen, is blunted by patches of unexpectedly "straight" performance.



SLAVE OFF COLOUR

Phil Dolan III. "*Junior*" . . . . . MR. JACK WHITING

The story is about a *troupe* whose patroness insists on a jazz ballet being added to their otherwise classical repertoire, and when eventually we see this new item performed it is the best part of the show. The setting is a garish Tenth Avenue dance-dive and the theme a fight over a girl; it is well executed, without being particularly original, and gives Miss VERA ZORINA and Mr. WHITING an opening of which they make the most.

The quality of the lyrics varies considerably, but the best, "It's Got To Be Love," is well above the average. Mr. LORENZ HART wrote them. The music is adequate while making no special impression, and the same is true of the décor.

It seemed to me that Miss GINA MALO had the worst of the deal. There is a crispness about her attack which merits the most pointed ammunition, and she has charm. Miss ZORINA had the richest part as the temperamental *ballerina*, and did well with it; and as the energetic patroness of the arts Miss OLIVE BLAKENEY, with her individual brand of hard-boiled forcefulness, was also better served. Mr. VERNON KELSO, who played the *maitre*, needs to stabilise his broken English, which is at one moment in fragments and the next miraculously whole again.



ON THEIR TOES

Vera Barnova . . . . . MISS VERA ZORINA
Phil Dolan III. "*Junior*" . . MR. JACK WHITING

After my hard words in these columns on the nearly-ubiquitous microphone and the gradual disappearance of the singing-voice, it is a pleasure to be able to give high marks for unamplified audibility to Miss MALO, Miss BLAKENEY and Mr. WHITING. They rely entirely, in the ancient fashion, on their own throats, and their words have shape.

ERIC.

Seven Keys to Colney Hatch

ONE of my most treasured early possessions, I remember, was a large bunch of keys. I don't know quite where they came from. I suppose I found them lying about in the attic at home. One always found exciting things in the attic. There were, I can recall, twenty-three keys on the bunch, and a broken corkscrew. I carried them for some weeks, but although I tried them perseveringly—the whole twenty-three of them—on every lock in the house, I never found one which any of them fitted. But they were a grand possession and very burglarious, and when finally they wore a hole in the pocket of my shorts and disappeared silently into some obscure hiding-place in the garden I was heartbroken. I expect by now they have been found and much treasured by somebody else. I hope he has had better luck than I over locks.

Nowadays, however, I don't really feel the same about keys as I did then. In fact for some time now they have been causing me a good deal of irritation. There are, so to speak, only four keys in my life at present, as opposed to twenty-three and a broken corkscrew. Moreover they are all of much the same neat size and shape, unlike the various massive pieces of iron of my earlier bunch. But they cost me infinitely more trouble than the twenty-three ever did. Perhaps it is because they all fit locks. Facing south and reading from right to left my keys are—

(1) The front-door.
(2) The ignition-key of the car.
(3) The key of my office.
(4) The key of the desk in my office.

By swizzling them round a bit on the ring one can get them into other orders, but that is their normal position. Frankly, I have carried them like that for years without ever realising that there *was* a key problem, until one day a month ago, when I rashly gave Simpson a lift home. Seeing me start up the car, Simpson immediately gave tongue.

"You don't mean to say you keep the ignition-key of your car on the same bunch as your other keys?" he said incredulously.

"Why not?" I said a little coldly. (Simpson is one of those men whose remarks imply that he always knew you were mad, but had previously supposed that you were not certifiable.)

"My good chap," said Simpson, "supposing you left the whole bunch with the ignition-key in the lock, and the car was pinched while you were at lunch? There'd you be with no car, shut out of your office and your house. It's absurd."

"Item," I replied, "I don't lock my office at lunch-time. Item, I never leave the ignition-key in the lock. The very fact that it is on the same bunch with other keys which I shall certainly want makes me take it out automatically. The idea is that it is impossible to start out in the car without

(1) Means of ingress to office;
(2) Means of access to desk;
(3) Means of return entry to house."

"Quite," said Simpson. "But supposing you came out without your key-ring and slammed the door? You couldn't get in again; it would be no use going to the office in a bus because you couldn't get in there, and you wouldn't even have the car to fetch a locksmith in."

"There would be somebody in the house to let me in again," I said weakly.

"We will postulate," said Simpson with relish, "that everyone is out."

Well, since then I have been thinking over this business about keys, and the thing is beginning to prey on my mind. I have tried—

(1) *The car and the house on one ring and the office and the desk on another.* Objection: It is possible to drive blithely to the office and then find I can't get in.

(2) *The car and the desk on one ring and the office and the house on another.* Objection: It is possible to drive to the office, find that the desk-key is useless because I haven't the key of the office, and to be unable to get back into the house to get the key of the office.

(3) *The car and the office on one ring and the house and the desk on another.* There are two snags here. I can (*a*) drive to the office, enter it, be unable to open the desk, and have no means of re-entering the house to get the key which would open the desk; or (*b*) go out for the evening in the car with Rachel, be unable to re-enter the house and be forced to spend the night in the office.

(4) *The desk-key separately and the others together.* Objection: It is possible to shut up my desk, slam the office-door, and leave myself with the other keys shut inside the desk in the office, having no car, no house, unable to open the desk with the desk-key because the desk is in the office and the key of the office is in the desk.

(5) *The house-key separately and the others together.* All right as long as I leave the others in the *house.* But obviously fatal if I shut them in the desk or even in the office.

(6) *The car-key separately and the others together.* Here again all right if I leave the car-key behind. Wherever it is I can get it, but disastrous if I leave the others either at home or in the office or in the desk.

(7) *The office-key separately and the others together.* Dangerous from abso-



"HERE'S SOME TERRIBLE NEWS FROM SPAIN—OUR WAR CORRESPONDENT WANTS MORE PAY."

lutely every standpoint. If I leave the office-key at home, the desk-key is bitter irony. If I leave the other keys at home I can neither get in to get them nor get to the office. And if I do get to the office I can't get at my desk. Alternatively, if I leave the office-key in the office——

I think you probably see the way it goes.

Well, I thought it over, as I say, and finally I decided that the only thing was to keep them all separately. Then at least, if I lost the house-key, I had the car and could work; if I lost the car-key I could take a bus, work and go home; and if I lost the office-key I could get to the office, climb through a window, open the desk, work and go home; and if I lost the desk-key I could just burst the darned thing open or be unavoidably prevented from working, just as I felt inclined. It seemed the safest compromise. I say seemed. . . .

I am writing this by courtesy of Messrs. LYONS, reader, to while away the time whilst a locksmith breaks open my house so that I can telephone to another locksmith to go and break open my office so that he can get at my desk, which I am afraid will have to be broken open. My car is outside. The police have taken my name for causing an obstruction, but, as I have pointed out, I'd love to move it if I had the ignition-key. You see, history has repeated itself. There is a small hole in my pocket, I find. I doubt if a key-ring would have gone through it, but those neat little keys . . .

It's odd that nobody has never taken a Major Step about Simpson.



Faint-hearted Troubadour. "I CAN BEAR IT ALL, MILDRED, BUT THE LUTE."

Claud, Our Critic; or, Ex Ore Parvulorum

WHEN Claud came down from Oxford
(Which was only the other day),
He came imbued with the certitude
Of where his mission lay;
He knew he was born a Critic,
So he wangled himself a job
On the literary page of *The Daily Rage*
(Half-column—thirty bob).

For Claud had always fancied—
As, alas! he fancies now—
He had a bent for disparagement,
And Claud was a regular wow
At notifying his betters
(And they really weren't few)
Loudly and long where they went wrong
And how little in fact they knew.

So isn't Claud in clover
On *The Daily Rage's* staff,
Where twice a week his oracles speak,
Telling the world? Not half.
Often he patronises
But oftener stoops to scoff,
And his cocksure pen tells better men
Just where they get off.

Claud is a babe and suckling
And no great shakes on Litt.,
But he keeps all that well under his hat
And he gets away with it;
And a great many decent people,
Excusably overawed,
Buy, borrow and read what they're told they need
In the critical chats of Claud.

Claud the cocksure critic!
He's short of a stock-in-trade,
But he's young and bright and he's always right,
For that's how Clauds are made;
And *The Rage's* million readers
Hang on his master word,
And he'll do his stuff till they call his bluff,
And *that* won't happen for long enough.
And *isn't* it all absurd? H. B.

An Impending Apology

"Ria Ginster is more associated in name with the operatic stage than the concert platform, and her voice in the top register has that precise quality better suited to the area."—*Scots Paper.*



"MUMMY, COME UPSTAIRS."
"NO, MY LEGS ARE TIRED."
"THEN COME UP ON YOUR HANDS."

Glass, 2037

PROGRESS in the manufacture of glass is the subject of Professor Brittle's *Hundred Years of Glazing*, published by Payne and Payne in 2037. The general survey of the industry in the Preface is perhaps worth quoting:—

"Until the third decade of the twentieth century glass was a fragile substance used chiefly for holding window-frames apart and folding round beer, and perhaps the first notable advance was the invention of safety-glass, which was in great demand for the windows of automobiles during the years when road-accidents were the chief recreation of the populace. Shortly afterwards 'invisible' glass was invented for use in the windows of shops, so that thieves could be driven mad by seeing apparently unprotected jewellery which they could not touch.

"Glass had for centuries been used for mirrors, and Professor Crucible in 1942 put on the market his famous 'Lingering Mirror,' which held reflections for a long time after the person reflected had gone away, and which, by the operation of a time-switch, would show reflections of any given date in the past, so that ladies who had lost the first blush of youth could look at themselves in their mirrors and find there the beauty that had left them. Eventually, however, the Government forbade the manufacture of Lingering Mirrors as too many purchasers of second-hand mirrors were driven to suicide by being able to tune in nothing but the faces of horrible men perpetually shaving.

"Experiments with flexible or bendable glass had been made for a long time, and flexible glass was available to the public at a cheap price in 1960, and used in most of the new houses erected in that and the following years. It had many advantages, but never became really popular as housewives found it very fatiguing to have to take the windows out of their frames after every high wind in order to iron them flat again.

"Glass had from the time of *Cinderella's* slipper been used in various ways for female apparel, but it was not until the invention of flexible glass that London tailors began to introduce it into masculine attire. Glass pork-pie hats were all the rage in 1965, and glass waistcoats were invariably worn with full evening dress in the following year; but the police intervened when lounge-suits made entirely of glass were put on the market by an enterprising firm early in 1967.

"1980 saw the great strike of glaziers following the general introduction of flexible invisible unbreakable glass, which they claimed was awkward to work with; not being able to see it, they frequently cut themselves. For a time the problem was unsatisfactorily met by tinting the invisible glass, but it was generally felt that this in some measure defeated its own end. But meanwhile the aged Professor Crucible had again been busy in his laboratory, and early in 1985 he astonished the world by marketing a glass that was not only unbreakable, invisible and flexible, but could not even be felt. In fact, as *The Glaziers' Gazette* enthusiastically remarked, it was for all practical purposes not there at all."



"You must excuse my whispering, but I've had a cold and lost my voice."
"That's a bad job, Sir, for a man as earns 'is living by 'ollering."

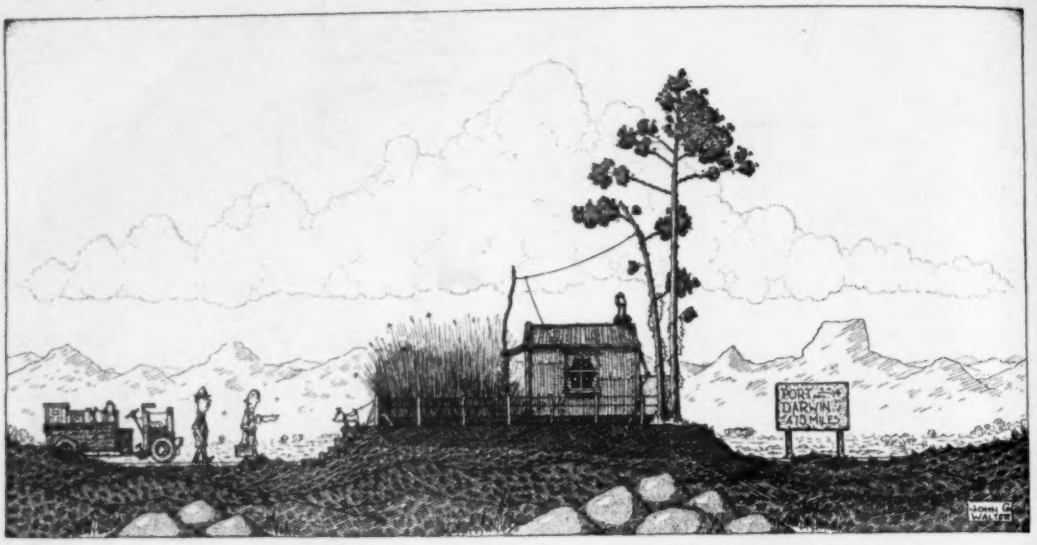
Red Tape at Tarryneeps

Wha cares that the horse is lying sick?
Wha cares that the red coo's sure tae pick?
That yon Leicester tup's no' up tae his wark,
An' the wife hae shirpit yer Sabbath sark?
There's a laddie sets in an office chair,
An' we fills in forms for tae keep him there.

We maun sell milk tae the Manse no more,
An' the Milk Pool van canna' rax the door;
The Inspector cam' an' condemn't the dairy
An' speired why the byre was no' more airy.
But hoo should a clairk in an office fash
Gin he checks his forms an' he draws his cash?

We've waitit weeks on a sock for the ploo
An' the threshin'-mill didna come when due;
The tatties is far ower wee for the riddle
An' the stacks is heatin' richt through the middle.
But a toon-bred schochle maun win his breid,
Sae fill in the forms until ye're deid.

Gae fetch the ink frae the parlour press—
Gin we leave them lyin' we'll like them less;
Though feedin' 's gettin' uncommon dear
An' we owe a year's rent tae the unctioneer—
Yet a gomeril sets in an office chair,
An' we pays oor pennies tae keep him there.



"THE TROUBLE IS I LENT MY LAWN-MOWER TO ROGERS OF PORT DARWIN."

Our Booking Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks.)

Tu Secundo Caesare Regnes

THERE is no doubt that the present Italian Government will put its back into the celebration of the two thousandth birthday of *Augustus Cæsar* (MACMILLAN, 8/6), which occurs this year. For the life of AUGUSTUS presents many picturesque affinities with that of MUSSOLINI: in fact from his first public appearance with the lictors and giraffes in the train of JULIUS CÆSAR to his absorption, as Emperor, of such minor offices as Minister of Roads (*Curator Viarum*), you trace the relish for and gradual monopoly of importance which is the mark of the dictator. But although Dr. BERNARD M. ALLEN of Toronto has written his lucid and readable biography in preparation for the bi-millenary, although he stresses the clutch on Egypt which reduced the Mediterranean temporarily to the status of "a Roman lake," he is more interested in producing a personal portrait than in estimating the blessings or curses of imperialism. AUGUSTUS, he points out, failed to leave (although he tried to do so) any such memoirs as those with which his great-uncle still disheartens our youth. So we start fair and are left —thanks to an honest and dispassionate handling—with as little animus or affection as we set out.

Mist of Error

A very dingy MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT is presented in *This Shining Woman* (COLLINS, 12/6), but I gather that Mr. GEORGE PREEDY feels that it is high time a little wind was taken out of the over-inflated sails of the feminist movement. Not that he deals in movements, his book, as becomes an historical novelist's first biography, being primarily a piece of portrait-painting. But the sitter is a rebel who made a failure of revolt, an eccentric whose bias towards unconventionality was practically forced on her by a wretched upbringing in one of the most brutal of ages. Neither reason nor humour was a strong point with this valiant and pathetic "rationalist," who, sickened by the disastrous marriages of her mother, sister and dearest friend, flung herself at the happily-married FUSELI—who spurned her; at the egoist IMLAY—who deserted her and her first child; and finally persuaded the reluctant GODWIN to forgo the anti-matrimonial principles she had professed to share in order to provide her with marriage-lines. MARY sympathetically debunked, "the immortal GODWIN" comes out better than usual; in fact Mr. PREEDY is to be congratulated on having endowed her whole circle with a greater semblance of life.

Afternoon at the Zoo

Wild animals, compassed securely behind steel and concrete, have no monopoly of hopeless captivity. The bars which separate them from the gaping crowd are only a dividing-line between two different sorts of cage; and that on the other side from the beasts, being constructed of less tangible materials, such as passion and convention and ignorance, is often more pitiable because its sudden limits go unrecognised. This is the theme of *People in Cages* (COLLINS, 7/6), in which Miss HELEN ASHTON, expert at the compression of a full novel into a short space of time, follows twenty or more characters through a hot, dusty dramatic afternoon at the London Zoo. Previous circumstance knits their stories together into a sufficiently close unity, whose centre is the hunt, narrowing every minute, of a bogus financier; but the strength of the novel lies mainly in Miss ASHTON's generous understanding of the stretchings and shrinkages which occur in the fabric of the average human mind. From the old Cockney grandmother stuffing diplomatic bull's-eyes into little *Ernie*, to the desiccated *Colonel* planning imaginary shots into the elusive brain of the hippopotamus, her people, sketched with humour and a most penetrating sympathy, come to life completely.

A strong feeling for the personalities of animals distinguishes the background of this interesting novel.

Poète Maudit

The singer of *Annabel Lee* is a flagrant example of the "over-biographed" artist. Mr. HERVEY ALLEN'S turgid *Israfel* has said (it is to be hoped) the last word about his life, but a complete critical edition of his works is still to seek. In installing *Edgar Allan Poe* (MACMILLAN, 6/-) among the "English Men of Letters," Mr. EDWARD SHANKS has done great service to both. He has cut biographical squalor down to a serviceable minimum and spread himself on poems, short stories, criticism and posthumous influence. His sole handicap is an odd preference for the short stories over the poems: a preference unshared by the public—to whom POE is emphatically "the poet"—and, so far as I know, by the critics. POE'S short stories, clever and original as they were, are not in the class of *conte* that may legitimately rank with a lyric. His finest lyrics are unapproachable, as the French imitators skilfully ranged by Mr. SHANKS only go to prove. It is exhilarating to find POE'S own views on poetry so happily meditated, though I miss the contention—which infuriated ANDREW LANG—that there is no such thing as a long poem.

The Psychology of Mutiny

The psychology of the mutineer, more especially in connection with the *Bounty* affair, has been a good deal before the public during the past year or two. It is an interesting if not exactly a pleasant subject; but it must regretfully be admitted that the collection of rather melodramatically-told yarns which Mr. R. L. HADFIELD has evidently been at some pains to gather together under the title *Mutiny at Sea* (GEOFFREY BLES, 8/6) fails to cast much useful light upon it. Mr. HADFIELD in his introductory chapter endeavours to indicate some of the factors which in his opinion tend to bring about disaffection among ships' companies; yet not one of the instances he cites—with the possible exception of the outbreak in the *Inglis*—is traceable to the causes he suggests. As a matter of fact it is one of the peculiarities of mutiny that it seldom appeared to break out in the real "hell-ship." Generally speaking a captain with a reputation for "softness" was more likely to have a mutiny to cope with than the typical "bully." The book contains some curious errors. DANA'S account of ship routine is quoted as "from a work of 1890"! and the quite incorrect statement is made that convicts were "chained hand and foot, penned in cells below decks," whereas it was the usual custom to bring them on deck and knock off their irons as soon as the ship conveying them was at sea. Technically too the book is not beyond reproach. What precisely does the author mean when he says that the *Flowery Land* "ran her easting down before rounding the Cape on a passage from London to Singapore"?



"I'M ONE O' THEM FELLERS 'OO'S VERY INCHOOATIVE AN' PIEKICAL. I'VE ONLY GOT TO LOOK AT THE MATE'S EYES TO TELL WOT 'E 'APPENS TO BE THINKIN' OF ME."

"AND I CAN TELL YOU WITHOUT."

Essence of Life

It is difficult to know how to describe all the segments of Miss SALLY BENSON'S book, *People Are Fascinating* (CONSTABLE, 7/6), because the word *sketches* suggests something incomplete and *short stories* something too compact and rounded, so I think these little extracts from the lives of so many different types had better be labelled "snatches." Miss BENSON knows exactly when to snatch. She pounces on the dominating wish, thought or whim in a person's

mind, and from that builds up a complete picture, just as a clever doctor makes his diagnosis from symptoms that have been unconsciously betrayed. All her characters—"The Man's Woman," with a blurred face for which men are thankful because "it looked like almost any face they wanted it to look like," "The Wife of the Hero" (in her hope only), "The Girl who Went Everywhere" but seemed to get nowhere, "Mrs. Bixby," who tried to give "different" parties, and the man who loved his wife because it made a useful boast—are described, ironically, shortly and quite often in a kindly way. I defy anyone to read this book and not recognise himself or herself (the latter more frequently because the author writes more about women) and a great many friends. I hope Miss BENSON will continue to find people fascinating and to introduce them so fascinatingly.

The Happy Bohemian

Everybody who is anybody in Bohemia knows HERMAN FINCK. To have held the baton at the Palace Theatre through all its changes of policy for thirty years and to have passed from there to "The Lane" for another ten is abundant proof of his success in what is certainly not the most stable branch of a profession precarious at best. Nor do musicians underestimate his musicianship—that is left for superior amateurs. He graduated in a hard practical school, playing violin in a theatre orchestra at fourteen with his father; studying composition at the Guildhall School; not disdaining service in pseudo-Hungarian bands and ball-room work after a hard day; writing band-parts and comic songs. He claims to have invented the musical pot-pourri. May it not be added that he also made the first signature-tune—"In the Sh–d–ws"? *My Melodious Memories* (HUTCHINSON, 18/-) is less concerned with his serious work and opinions than with the irresponsible jokes and encounters of his leisure. To have made so many shameless puns and still to be held a good fellow is itself a fine testimonial. He takes life's ups and downs as he finds them. To ARNOLD BENNETT, characteristically trying to introduce him to the technique of girth-control, he replies: "DEAR ARNOLD,—If I lost my tummy I should have to have new clothes and new photographs. No one would recognise me from my caricatures and my career would be ruined." Many caricatures by brother Savages adorn these cheery pages.



"AND NOW, MY DEAR, I MUST FLY."

Wheel and Woe

By this time all of us who have made the acquaintance of that sound deducer, *Mr. Tolefree*, know that his holidays are apt to be interrupted. So when he joined his friend *Professor Gregory Pye* at the "Wheel Inn" in Wiltshire it is no surprise to find that soon he was busily engaged with *The Mystery of Mr. Mock* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 7/6). Moreover, *Mock's* sudden disappearance was presently explained by *Tolefree* discovering his body in the stream which flowed by the inn. Here then is a situation that called for the attention of the police, but Mr. R. A. J. WALLING can be trusted to give his investigator a free hand, and on this occasion I am inclined to think that the liberty allowed him amounted almost to licence. Otherwise I have no objection to lodge against a tale that is built on stable foundations.

Brummagem

"Mr. GEORGE A. BIRMINGHAM" is one of our best manufacturers of light fiction, but his new book, *Mrs. Miller's Aunt* (METHUEN, 7/6), rather suggests mass-production. He has exploited the neat idea of a conspiracy to switch rich old *Miss Pine's* attention from spiritualism, to the comparatively harmless interest of collecting old furniture, by means of messages purporting to come from the late *Lord Gaythorn* heartily condemning that with which she has filled his old home. Her nephew by marriage and three friends are in the plot, but one of them apparently forgets all about it, for he has to have his part fully explained to him halfway through, while the childless *Millers* produce a daughter so suddenly that the reader feels that he must have missed a chapter or two. *Miss Pine* is blamed both for her modern taste in furniture and for her fakes, and some odd spelling adds to the confusion. Such are the author's gifts, however, that the tale is entertaining in spite of these imperfections, and he has made his *dramatis personæ* speak in character in a way to excite the envy of every would-be playwright.

Unwelcome Guests

In allowing *Caleb Sagg* to tell his own story, see *Murder of Me* (HUTCHINSON, 7/6), Mr. J. F. W. HANNAY hit upon a happy idea, which he has developed on lines that are for the most part effective. This is no small feat, for *Caleb* was, to put it mildly, an unpleasant bounder, though he is to some extent redeemed by his awareness of the fact. Several members of his house-party in Gloucestershire were suspected of trying to murder him, and one of them was very unlucky in not being successful. Whether you detect the would-be murderer is of little importance in a story that is not exclusively dependent on crime and criminals for its interest. Mr. HANNAY has inherited a pretty wit, and when he keeps it under control, as in *Caleb's* delightful but profane description of cricket, he is most entertaining.

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Charivaria

A CORRESPONDENT claims to have caught a fish with his umbrella; which reminds us that we once caught a man with ours.

* * *

"I never take the slightest notice of what doctors say," declares a reader. This is the sort of thing that breaks the hearts of the writers of patent-medicine advertisements.

* * *

"Vesuvius has shown no great violence in recent years," a volcanist points out. Of course it may possibly be that it has had more local competition.

* * *

In the opinion of a big-game hunter the average Londoner might just as well not have a nose for all the use he makes of it. He evidently forgets that most Londoners use it to rest their horn-rimmed spectacles on.

* * *

A famous swimmer has just finished a tour of the globe giving exhibitions of swimming. So has our goldfish.

* * *

New York contractors are buying up all the old motor-cars they can, the material being used for making farm implements. Beating their Fords into ploughshares, in fact.

* * *

"Every bridegroom should wear some ornament appropriate to the occasion," asserts a newspaper correspondent. We refuse to suggest lemon-blossom.

* * *



A London doctor has taken to writing thrillers. Probably the first sliding-panel-doctor in the profession.

* * *

At a fancy-dress ball in a London night-club recently a reveller who was causing considerable amusement at the bar was suddenly discovered to be a plain-clothes policeman in full uniform.



Animal lovers are starting a crusade to abolish the use of the horse in warfare. So now all we need is that lovers of men shall start a crusade too.

* * *

A correspondent says that when travelling by Underground he always has the sensation of flying. In the straposphere, no doubt.

* * *

"Only trust can make love complete," writes a novelist. This would make a very good greetings telegram for TROTSKY to send to STALIN.

* * *

A superstitious reader says that a fall downstairs means that one may expect an early visitor. It often turns out to be the doctor.

* * *



According to a scientist there are certain notes of music quite inaudible to the human ear. Most office-boys are at pains to avoid them.

* * *

One of the great Russian chess masters has a long beard. As might be expected, he frequently sweeps the board.

* * *

"There is enough nicotine in a cigar to kill an elephant," we are told. And that, best beloved, is why elephants never, never smoke cigars.

* * *

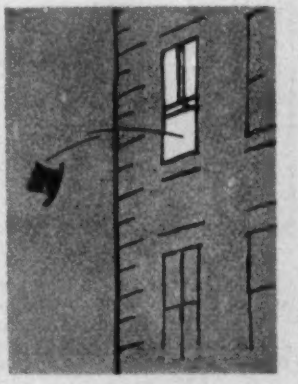
We read that the upright piano is suffering in competition with the modern baby grand. It is fighting with its back to the wall.

* * *

"There are people of whose existence nobody knows," states an explorer. How on earth does he know?

* * *

"If I have a late night at the club and come home in the early hours, my wife does not mind a scrap," declared a J.P. in court recently. That being so, of course it's an ideal time to have one.



Oh!

Oh, for the touch of a vanished land!
  Oh, for a fog or a wreck!
Oh, for the chance to be able to stand
  Upright for more than a sec!

Oh, that the coat hanging near to this bunk
  Should cease for an instant to sway!
Oh, that the ship could be tastefully sunk
  Or else spirited swiftly away.

Britannia, Britannia, the Queen of the Sea,
  What are you ruling to-night,
While one of your subjects is bounced like a pea
  And the waves fly as high as a kite?

Is it true that your Union Jack is unfurled
  On the far-away lands you have claimed,
But though you have conquered a third of the world,
  The ocean as yet is untamed.

In exchange for a packet of sand from Sahara
  I'll give you for what they are worth
My diamonds and pearls, and I'll trade my tiara
  For the mouldiest morsel of earth.

At breasting the waves, which are yellow as soup,
  This liner-de-luxe is a dud;
And I'd murder my mother to be in a coop
  On a mound of immovable mud.

Oh, for the sight of a road or a tree!
  Oh, for a flower-laden breath!
Oh, for this perfectly damnable sea!
  Oh, for a sweet sudden death!

V. G.



"But I hear you're not going to Stuhlweisser after all, Claude."

"Oh, do be careful, Alonzo. I am not going to Salzkummer *this* year. It was Stuhlweisser I wasn't going to *last* year."

The Britisch Empire

Typical conversations for nordic students of britisch ways and means

III.—In Johannesburg

A Kolonial. Eh! Ho! Ho! Holla! Hay! Come along do! Be welcome! There now! Well well!

Lord Smith. Can this fellow be one of the Best People? His manner is somewhat unconcerting.

Viscount Brown. Disgracious!

Lord Robinson. Now, I pray, my good Sir, I say, present yourself before initiating the chat!

The Kolonial. O bardon me! bardon me! I pass as Hon. the Peter Biggs. Which names are you called?

Lord Smith. Permit us, if you will be so kind, to inquire your connexions.

Hon. Biggs. Surely you are familiar with my grandmama, the Duchess of Charing Kross?

Viscount Brown. Of course, dear me, ours is an acquaintanceschip of some time now. How do? Ei! Well I never did! Think of that!

Lord Robinson. All friends of mine are a friend of yours.

Lord Smith. I suppose you take part in kontrolling the Empire?

Hon. Biggs. You have schmacked the nail on the head with one blow.

[*Introductions mutually are bandied about.*

Hon. Biggs. So happy I am to receive Britisch milords of the very Best quality that I beg you to go so far as to set yourself at my disposals. Assuredly will I schow you many wonders. This part of the Empire is well worth a good look.

Viscount Brown. Ooher! Are we to notice the aborigines at battle-froliks?

Lord Robinson. And examine the gold-minings? The precious metall?

Lord Smith. And the Falls of Niagoro?

Lord Robinson. Come! That was not in satisfactory taste. Surely you are aware of Niagoro being not the Empire? It is domiciled in Amerika. You intend, I suppose, the Falls of Viktoria, eh? Come now! Answer me! Make amends!

Lord Smith. Ei! Really! Do not grumple. It was but a Jeographikal misconceptitude, a tongue-slip.

Lord Robinson. A milord should cognise the Empire from head to foot. For my part I know the whole thing, withinside-withoutside. At leastways I am aware of the waterfallings kontrolled by the foreign elements.

Hon. Biggs. Come! Do not begin a bikkering! Accompany me to a coqu-tail reception at the house of my personal croni, Hon. the Rupert Watkinson.

Viscount Brown. Splendid! I am a-thirscht! It is I who could do with a pleasant disch of pik-me-up and put-me-right.

Lord Smith. Therefore let us sample the likuor.

Lord Robinson. Not forgetting that we may come a-face to a-face with a portion of the Best people, such as it may be, although kolonial.

All. Hora!

"Exceptional Opportunity to Try Our Double-Life Pyjamas."—*Shop-window Notice.*

Are these the celebrated "Naughty Nighties"?

"He receives £12,000 a year, while his assistant, Mr. Frank Pick, earns £10,000."—*Manchester Paper.*

Below that, what do they do—slave?



SALUT AUX DAMES

["I hope that you will appreciate this gesture of the German Government."—*Herr von Ribbentrop, as reported in a speech last week accepting the plan for banning volunteers to Spain.*]



"So good of you to bring your harp along, Mr. Twitchett. I'm only sorry we didn't get an opportunity to hear you play it."

Imagination

"When do the Wilsons come to dinner?" Laura inquired, as one well accustomed to the ways of the house.

"They're not the Wilsons any longer," I said.

"Oh, dear! Not dead, surely?"

"No, no—not dead."

"I know. They've had a legacy and changed their name. Well, I must say I'm quite glad. I hope it's a really good one. They ought to give a splendid party to celebrate it, and ask everybody in the neighbourhood. Why not a dance? And I could come and stay for it. It'll be quite a change to meet them at a dance, instead of just at dinner here, with the General and old Lady Flagge and you and Charles."

"I might get a new dress," I said rather wistfully.

"You might and ought. After all, nothing can go on for ever, not even your mauve crêpe-de-chine. Why not black-and-silver?"

"That's not a bad idea. But as a matter of fact there won't necessarily be a dance at all."

"What a shame! I thought better of the Wilsons. Or do they just feel it would be disrespectful to the memory of a benefactor to give a dance? Of course they could always wait. Say a year and a day, like in fairy-tales. You know how it's always a year and a day—not just a plain year."

"In certain legal arrangements a similar convention is observed."

Laura did not pay to this well-turned phrase the attention that it merited.

"If it's a title, I hope it's a good one. Something like Waldegrave, or Fauntleroy, or Douglas-Norfolk-Mandeville."

"I can imagine nothing easier to remember, nor simpler to use, than Douglas-Norfolk-Mandeville. Actually, however, the Wilsons are still the Wilsons."

"I thought you just said they weren't any more."

"They are," I said, "and they're not."

"Nearly as simple as Douglas-

Norfolk-Mandeville," I heard Laura mutter to herself.

"What's really happened is this. You'll never believe it, after all these years of meeting them at dinner every time you come to stay."

"Oh, goodness, I know! He's got into trouble and had to go to prison, and naturally they've changed their name. I mean, poor Major Wilson has just got a number, and *she*'s going about calling herself Mrs. Yannedis or something like that."

"There isn't anything like that. What on earth made you think of it?"

"Oh, I saw it over a shop once, in a place called Hounsditch," said Laura. "I might just as well have thought of Hounsditch."

"Well, Mrs. Wilson hasn't thought of either. She's still Mrs. Wilson."

"You mean he's left her? Well, of course they're not the Wilsons any more if there's only one of them. How awful for her! Or isn't it?"

"I don't know whether it would be or not."

"If it were me it wouldn't be a bit," said Laura.

I saw what she meant, but preferred not to discuss the point.

"The Wilsons," I said, "are still together, and still living at 'The Gables,' and nobody has left them a penny, and they haven't either of them gone to prison."

"You know," said Laura, "I don't think you ought to say a thing like that. The minute you say they haven't either of them gone to prison it makes it sound as if they *ought* to have gone there ages ago, and just got off for lack of evidence or because they bribed the witnesses."

I said at once that the Wilsons, so far as I knew, hadn't bribed the witnesses and that, in fact, there had been no witnesses.

Laura, taking this in the wrong way, at once inquired whether the Wilsons had commiteed the perfect crime.

"I should never have thought either of them had brains enough for that," she admitted; "but, after all, one never knows. It may have been part of the plan to seem rather dull-witted. They must be frightfully good actors, both of them."

"No, Laura, they're not. From A to Z you've misunderstood the Wilsons. They're perfectly ordinary and rather old-fashioned, and they just feel they don't want to be called Major and Mrs. Wilson any more."

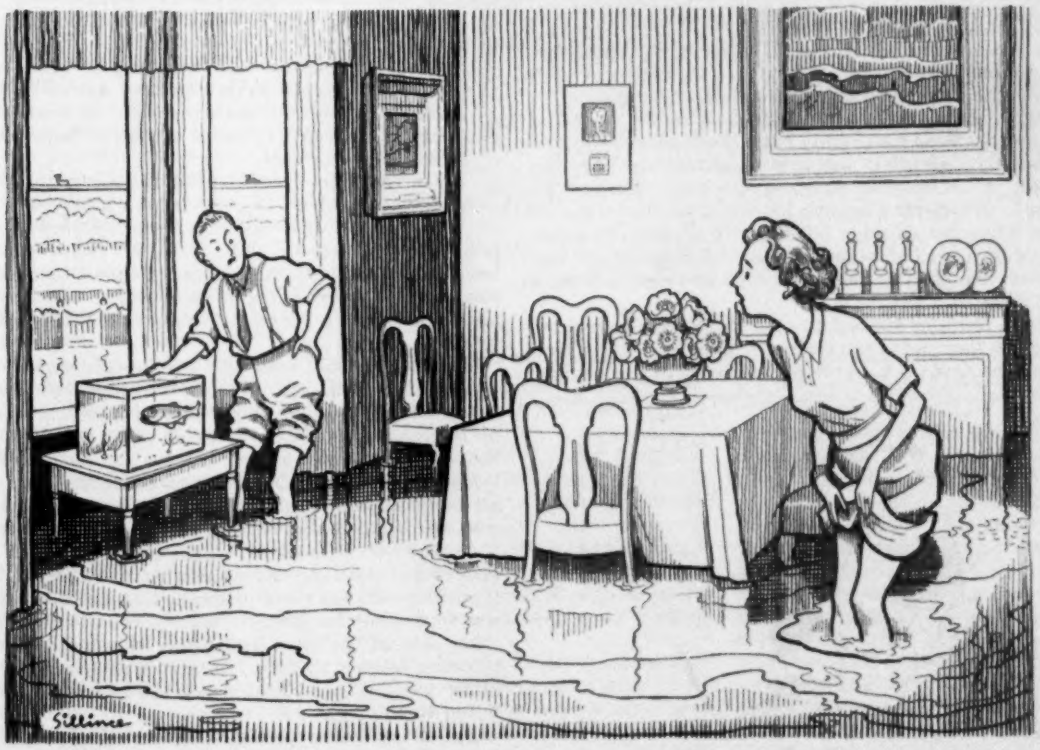
"That isn't old-fashioned at all. It's frightfully modern. I know heaps of people who were really christened Maud or Launcelot and simply can't bear it, and just become Jane or Peter. I believe the psycho-analysts have some theory about it. Tell me — have the Wilsons ever been analysed?"

"I should think it most unlikely."

"The more they say they don't want to be the more they need it," said Laura. "And from what you've just told me—I mean, about the poor old things wanting to call themselves Douglas-Norfolk-Mandeville, and trying to commit the perfect crime, and then going all up-to-date and modern and wanting to be known as Jane and Peter—well, it really does seem as if they ought to be taken in hand a bit."

"And all this," I exclaimed, "because the poor dear Wilsons, after being friends and neighbours of Charles and myself for nearly ten years, have at last suggested that we should call them by their Christian names!"

E. M. D.



"SHALL WE LET AUGUSTUS HAVE A LITTLE EXERCISE?"

Reaction Against the Whimsies of Anglophiles

I AM sick of the sound of our villages' names
And of hearing our poets extolling their claims;
I've been weary of Nastey and Ugley for years,
While Gweek and Queen's Camel just bore me to tears.

But sing me the names that you find in the Congo,
Land of the lion, the buck and the bongo!
Sing me Kapuka, Kadinga, Basoko,
Makura, Kiwari, Bugungu, Boloko,
Bolombo, N'gongo, Mussum, Zappu Zapp,
Mukallalakoshi—oh, man, what a map!
Regale me with Rana, with homely Banana,
Muata Kumbana and Acuettana;
And find me the man, be he Nordic or Zulu,
Who'd feel no nostalgia for Bangulungulu!
Come, sing me Lobengo and Bango and Zongo—
The glorious names that you find in the Congo!

(And yet I'm afraid—and I grant it you freely—
They're merely Queen's Camel and Co. in Swahili.)

The Bouncing Labrador

IF you were at Cruft's I dare say you saw LORNA, Lady HOWE's black Labrador, Ch. Cheverell's Ben of Banchory, which got the trophy for being the best dog in the show. Of this noble animal *The Times* said:—

"A son of her Ch. Ingleton Ben, he is of fine Labrador character, he moves freely, and it does not seem possible for him to put a foot wrong when he is standing."

It is fortunate for Ch. Cheverell's Ben of Banchory that I was not one of the judges at Cruft's. (It is fortunate also for me and for everybody else concerned, if we're counting blessings.) I have no doubt that Ch. Cheverell's Ben of Banchory deserved his trophy, but I don't believe I should have had the strength of will to vote for him had I been on the spot. I am unsound on black Labradors; I cannot be detached. Whenever I see one I think of an animal named Friday, a familiar of mine in the early nineteen-twenties. Friday was of fine Labrador character, he moved freely, and it did not seem possible for him to put a foot right whatever he was doing.

For one thing he seemed to be able to walk more comfortably on three legs than on four. Usually it was a forepaw that he kept off the ground, but he wasn't particular: any one would do, just so long as it made him bounce. And a full-size black Labrador bouncing as much in proportion as a Pekinese is by no means a restful sight. People who had never had any experience of Friday would cheerfully offer to take him for a walk and come back after it quite shattered in the nerves, not from the continual irritation of stopping to examine his paws to see which one he had a thorn in (although that was considerable), but from the sight of him incessantly bobbing up and down in one corner of the field of vision like the lid on a boiling saucepan.

The only word of praise for this habit of Friday's that I ever heard came from an elderly friend of my Uncle Joe's, who said that to take the dog out gave a highly beneficial shaking-up to the liver. I have since wondered whether Friday bounced out of consideration for his own liver, just as dogs will eat grass medicinally; but really I think it was just part of his personality.

Another thing he probably did just to be different was to lavish affection on postmen. He was cool, even disgusted, in his attitude to butchers' and grocers' boys, milkmen and other regular visitors; but postmen he positively fawned on. There was some distance for postmen to walk between the gate and the house, and Friday would go with them the whole way, staggering and leaping about with a welcoming expression. New postmen, arriving with the snarls of the other dogs in the neighbourhood still ringing in their ears, would often be utterly nonplussed by this treatment, reach the house in an unnerved condition and deliver the wrong letters. A young postman on his first visit was once ill-advised enough to walk up towards the house with one of his very loose boots undone, and Friday in the course of his prancings got the forepaw that he was then keeping off the ground stuck in the top of the postman's boot, and left it there, no doubt out of politeness. They surged right up to the house together as a five-legged unit. Friday appeared to be enjoying it, but I could see the young postman felt terrible.

"What's the matter with that dog?" he asked me, wiping his brow, when Friday had got out of his boot.

"Nothing," I said. I was about twelve or thirteen at the time and I thought Friday's eccentric behaviour was probably the canine norm.

"That seem leery to me," observed the young postman simply. The next time he came he rode a bicycle and gave the letters to me without dismounting. Friday took little notice of people on bicycles. However, this time he must have suddenly caught sight of the postman's hat or something, for by a startling demonstration of affection he made the postman fall off just as he was riding out of the gate.

The chief trouble with his feet, though, came when he was eating or drinking. A bone, of course, or a biscuit he would take on the lawn and lie down to, holding it between his forepaws: he wasn't fool enough to try to hold one of his feet off the ground while he was dealing with a bone or a biscuit; but when he drank or was given any kind of mess on a plate the results were incalculable. He used to put one paw against the edge of his enamelled water-bowl, poise the other above it, shove his head down almost diagonally, and lap. Every now and then he fell down, sprawling with his chest in the water, and then he would simply reverse the position, placing the other paw at the other side of the bowl and lifting the one he had been propping himself up with. If there was a lump of sulphur in the water it would leap out on the ground and someone would tread on it.

As for messes on plates, they speedily became messes everywhere. Friday seldom allowed himself to fall right down into a plate, but from time to time he would step on



"SHE MARRIED BENEATH HER."

the edge of the plate so that it tilted up and despatched pieces of food with a good deal of force in some unexpected direction. When the plate was licked clean Friday would still be occupied with his meal for some time all over an area of many square feet.

I have said enough about this distant relative of Ch. Cheverell's Ben of Banchory to indicate why my judgment of Labradors is inevitably warped. Just as some people cannot see an apparently docile Alsatian dog without expecting it to fly at the nearest throat, so I can never see a Labrador without thinking it is about to bounce like a clock-spring up to the nearest postman. No doubt Friday was unique; but I can't get over the feeling. R. M.

Feet

For the last half-hour I have been looking at my feet and musing on Life. But mostly I have been musing on my feet. This is all because when I went round to Beading and Horsehair to purchase a really comfortable armchair I was so long on the job that at last they said I had better design a chair for myself and let them build it for me.

So I went home and designed a chair such as had never hitherto been seen on earth. A very deep chair with cushions built in along the arms and an inset ash-tray on each side and a sort of collapsible table across the front on which heavy books, cups of tea, etc., could be conveniently rested. At least the table-affair was collapsible in the original design, but Isabel wisely pointed out that the great trouble with things collapsible is that they collapse.

"You'll keep forgetting the table is there," she said, "and knocking everything flying. Or even if you remember it is there you are liable to upset it every time you heave a manly sigh."

So we decided to have the table-affair fixed firmly to the chair, but then of course Isabel found another objection.

"*If* you have the table-affair fixed across the arms," she said, "how are you going to sit down? You'll have to think it out carefully or you'll be like *Robinson Crusoe* when he built his boat and couldn't get it down to the sea.

So we made our measurements very carefully, and in the final design a large enough aperture was left *under* the table-affair for me to crawl through, the thinnest part of the aperture being wider than the thickest part of me by one-and-a-half inches. Isabel suggested two-and-a-half to allow for growth, but I refused to be so pessimistic.



NARCISSUS

When we showed Beading and Horsehair the plans they were a good deal startled.

"If you *do* crawl under the table into the chair," said Beading, "you'll be the wrong way up when you arrive at your destination."

"The objection *had* occurred to me," I said loftily, "but I have worked out mathematically that it will be possible to reverse myself with a quick wriggle."

So they shrugged their shoulders and said they would get on with it as quickly as possible, and the chair was delivered this afternoon while Isabel was out. I unpacked it carefully and decided to go for a test sit without waiting for Isabel to come in. I placed a bottle of whisky and a glass and a siphon on the table-affair, and a large tin of cigarettes in the special shelf in the left arm. Then, considerably excited, I crawled under the table-affair and gave a quick and scientific wriggle. I reversed splendidly, but then remembered to my horror that in my calculations I had forgotten to allow for the subsidence of the cushions under my weight. My feet shot up in the air and peered at me from behind the table-affair and my elbows jammed in the special built-in shelves. Until Isabel comes home I am a helpless prisoner and must content myself by musing with what philosophy I can command on Life and Feet. But principally Feet.

"Squash"

I AM rather tired of reading that little paragraph about the increase in popularity of squash rackets. You know the one I mean. "Remarkable progress in this country . . . estimated that there are now *x* hundred thousand players . . . court makers working overtime . . ." and so on. The paragraph always ends, you will remember, with a claim that the reason for this extraordinary, etc., etc., is that the game gives one in half-an-hour enough exercise, etc., etc.

Now I am the last person to decry squash rackets. I play the game sometimes myself, and I entirely agree that in half-an-hour it gives one enough exercise for anything. In fact, at the end of half-an-hour I usually feel that another five points would make it unnecessary for me ever to bother about exercise again. Having been brought up in the tradition that the sicker a game makes you feel the better game it is, I am prepared to agree that squash is a Good Game and a Good Exercise and all that; but nevertheless I cannot help feeling that it has its drawbacks, and I think it is time somebody pointed them out. My main complaint is the complete lack of uniformity and standardisation about squash. I do not refer only to the size of the court. In the sort of squash I play a few extra feet more or less and a greater or less degree of squashiness in the ball don't matter much. But the etiquette of the game hasn't been worked out properly. The things which are Done and things which are Not Done have local variations. In older games everyone knows where he is. In cricket, for example, it is Not Done for a bowler deliberately to kick up the wicket. If you want it kicked up you put on a left-hander who bowls round the wicket and can't *help* it. The ethics of the game are properly understood by all. But in squash everybody is still at sixes and sevens about the most elementary points. For example—

(1) *Getting in the Way*

There is every variation here between the Appallingly Sporting and the What's the Good of Playing if You Don't Go All Out to Win? I never get through more than one game in half-an-hour with Spinks, for example, because two points out of every three end in "Sorry o'man let rot I couldn't have got near it of course you could I was bang in your light." On the other hand we have all encountered that beefy individual who shoulders you into a corner of the court and holds you firmly pinned to a wall with one hand while he plays drop-shots down the other and responds with raised eyebrows and compressed lips to your tentative suggestion of a let.

(2) *Snakery and Swipage*

Here again there are two opposing schools of thought. I recently played for the first time with a middle-aged gent at his club. He hit the ball very hard indeed with superb inconsequence, but seemed very slow of foot. Every time I played a drop shot he just let it go and handed me the ball for the next point with a sort of Resounding No Comment. I was puzzled at the time, but afterwards, when we were changing, he remarked rather distantly, "Of course we play for the fun of the thing here—a good hard knockabout and a bit of exercise. We don't go in for These Cunning Little Pats of Yours." I have not been asked to his club since. Apparently I had, so to speak, consistently shot the fox.

(3) *Hitting Opposition*

The rule about hitting one's opponent in squash is, I believe, quite clear, and is as in golf, i.e., it is his job not to be in the way. But whereas in golf one is seldom hit by anything but a well-judged rebound off the lady's tee-box, in squash it is possible to be hit a painful welt on the ear by somebody who had the whole of the rest of the court to hit into and who can nevertheless claim the point because his shot "would have been up." This is not only adding insult to injury, but it leaves the way open for murderous and profitable attacks by the unscrupulous. I have known men who were so adept at the "My dear chap did it hurt you sorry but I think it was going up silly rule isn't it" technique that the only safe procedure when playing them was to spend one's whole time cowering against the back wall.

(4) *How Long is a Match?*

In most games there is a clear limit of time or of happenings. You play until the whistle blows or until you are all out or what not. In squash, however, the whole thing is far too flexible. I have known people who set a tremendous pace at the start, and having won the first two games and reduced themselves to a state where I had only to Stand Up to Win, have just succeeded in croaking out "Only—'nother—ten—minutes—not worth—starting 'nother game now," and have led the way victoriously to the dressing-rooms. And I have known athletic and greyhound-like individuals who, when I have husbanded my resources and thrown all I had left in the back of my head into what I took to be the decisive last game, have calmly announced that they have booked the court for an hour and so far it's frightfully close, isn't it? If I had my way there should be a rigid rule that a game of squash lasted a certain time and then stopped. *Not* until the Next People Come and Bang on the Door, or Until We Feel We've Had Enough. People are too variable about Banging on the Door, and I for one always feel I've Had Enough all the time.

I know what the reply to all this will be—that thank goodness squash is a game which is played by Gentlemen and Sportsmen *with* Gentlemen and Sportsmen, and that standardisation and a lot of fool rules would ruin it. I agree. But I must say that if we can't Standardise Squash it would make it a lot *easier* if we could Standardise Gentlemen, so to speak.

Disproportional Representation

Everard Galliproof gazed dejectedly at the maze of dotted lines whereon he was supposed to be inscribing the details of his literary life, and moved his fountain-pen about in vague helpless gestures.

"You know," he sighed deeply, "it's all very discouraging."

I said I didn't see what there was discouraging about being invited to bare his innermost secrets for the benefit of the readers of *Whackett's Directory of British Writers*, especially when Mr. Whackett was so generous as to offer to let him have a copy for only fourteen-and-sixpence instead of the usual price of fifteen shillings; but Everard said he wasn't exactly thinking of that.

"What I mean," he explained, "is that there seems to be so little to say about me compared with these other people. Have a look at this, for instance."

Mr. Whackett had enclosed a specimen page of his Directory, on which he had gathered, in impressive disregard of alphabetical order, the entries of his most distinguished subscribers. It was full of effusions of this kind:—

PARKINSON, J. Bilgehampton. *B.* 1877, *ed.* Harford and Belial College, Oxbridge. Feature Editor, *Daily This*, 1900–02; Sports Editor, *Daily That*, 1903–7; Poetry Editor, *Daily Thing*, 1912–14; Knitting Editor, *Weekly Matter*, 1919-22; Editor, *White Mouse Fanciers'*



"I LEAVE THE ORDERING TO YOU, AUBREY. ANYTHING OUT OF SEASON WILL DO FOR ME."

Gazette, 1922–37; Author of *The Sex Life of the Bee* (1914), *Primitive Peoples in Western California* (1915), *Recollections of a Battalion Signals Officer* (1923), *Through Unknown Ataxia* (1927), *White Mice in the War* (1931). Novels: *Was She to Blame?* (1921), *The Corpse in the Cutting* (1926), *The Body in the Buttery* (1928), *Death in the Dustbin* (1930), *The Hurst Park Mystery* (1931), *Who Killed Ignatius O'Neil?* (1933), etc. All pub. Whatto. Also essays, poems, criticisms, etc. *M.* in 1910 Louisa Amelia Tweedlepipe; 3*s.*, 4*d.* *Recreations:* Walking, riding. *Clubs:* Senior Journalists'. *Add.:* London.

"I do see what you mean," I said sympathetically.

"Apart from anything else," Everard complained, "it's so ostentatious. Look at that bit where he married Louisa Tweedlepipe. What the dickens does it matter whether she only had three-and-fourpence or sixpence-halfpenny? And anyway it isn't fair that he should have to pay the same for his Directory with half-a-column as I do with half-an-inch."

"It's up to you," I pointed out, "to earn the right to more space for yourself. With the possible exception of Louisa Tweedlepipe, J. Bilgehampton Parkinson's record is one of solid achievement. Why shouldn't you go out and emulate his example?"

Everard Galliproof's face lit up with sudden determination. "Boy," he said, "I will!"

Smacking the table with his fist, he went out into the night. For some days I scarcely saw him, except now and then when I would get a fleeting glimpse of him as he rounded a corner into or out of Shaftesbury Avenue. In a week's time he called me in to show me the fruits of his labour.

"I'll give Parkinson, J. Bilgehampton a run for his money," he said between set teeth as he prepared once more to address himself to the dotted lines.

He wrote steadily for a long time. At the end he handed the result to me. "How does that look?" he inquired, his voice resonant with pride.

It looked brilliant:—

GALLIPROOF, Everard Archibald. *B.* 1910, *ed.* Ruggingham. Author of articles, etc., for daily Press, etc., etc. *M.* in 1935 Sylvia Galliproof, *née* Smith. *Recreations:* Talking, eating, drinking, smoking. *Clubs:* Anglo-Apache, Black Maria, Bughouse, Catamaran, Cat's Tail, Chez Booboo, Chez Toutou, Chèvre qui Saute, Come Right Inn, Donald Duck's, Eighty-Eight, Fanny's, Flying Stag, Frankie's, Green Pastures, Gringoire, Happy Valley, Horse's Neck, Laughing Cheese, Minnie the Moocher's, Narks, Nellie's, Ostrich, Parson's Nose, Passion Fruit, Pink Elephant, Rats, Sampan, Six of Diamonds, Ten per Cent., Toucan, Touts, White Pigeon, Willie's, Zenana. *Add.:* London.

"It cost me nearly three pounds in subscriptions," Everard said. "That was as much as I could do in a week. But next year we'll give Parkinson, J. Bilgehampton real value for his fourteen-and-six."

Four Hundred a Year

"Oh!" said my poor friend Poker indignantly, "so we're *slackers*, are we?"

Poker represents Burbleton (East), and he was indignant at the newspaper talk about sparse attendance in the Chamber of the House of Commons, about "counts" and "quorums" and the rest.

"And *you*, Mere Elector," said Poker, "have the effrontery to write to the papers and bleat about our £400 a year! Just because a 'count' is called from time to time and sometimes, on a Private Members' Day, the House is counted out. Listen, Foul Voter, and I will tell you a piece.

"First, I agree that, with so many problems and so little time, we should waste not a minute, and therefore, in theory, we should never be 'counted out.' But when it happens you must not assume that the cause is always 'slackness' or 'non-attendance.' It may, on the contrary, be the result of great exertion by a large crowd, especially on a 'private Friday.' Suppose, for example, that a Member successful in the Ballot puts down a Bill to Beautify Life by the Provision of Free Gardenias for Bus-Conductors. No decent man would want to vote against such a Bill, especially if he represented innumerable bus-conductors. On the other hand, it would be futile to give the benignant measure a Second Reading. For H.M. Gov. would never permit it to reach the Statute Book, it would vainly occupy the time of a Standing Committee, and perhaps be a block to more deserving Bills. Therefore, after one o'clock, some Member 'begs to take notice that there are not forty Members present.' (In the *Chamber*, mark you—there may be two or three hundred present in the building.) The hour-glass is turned, the enemy huddle together round the corner outside the Chamber and sometimes dissuade their colleagues from entering; and if after two minutes there are still not forty Members present the House is 'counted out' and adjourned.

"I deplore these manœuvres myself," said Poker. "They are not understood outside, because they are never explained to the public, and so create a wrong impression. Also, by the rules, you cannot 'count out' the House for one Bill and start again on the next; so that the admirable little Bill which is next on the list may be stifled for ever through no fault of its own. Also, I believe in everyone having his chance, even the Friends of Free Gardenias for British Bus-Conductors. And so, when the bell rings in the dining-room and the policeman bellows 'Count!' I always leap from my soup or sausage and canter nobly along the corridors, risking dyspepsia for the democratic principle. All this may sound silly to you, Foul Voter, but it is not quite so silly as it sounds.

"The other day, it is true," the legislator continued, "a count was called when Government business, the Keeping Fit Campaign, was under discussion; and many circular statesmen appropriately struck their first blow in the campaign by panting at the double towards the Chamber. But it is *not* true, as some suggested, that a quorum was difficult to find. The precincts, as usual, were swarming with legislators, almost all at Parliamentary work of some kind or other. Dismiss from your mind, Vile Voter, the notion that the debating Chamber, which is all you see, is the only part of Parliament that matters. You do not say that a pugilist is idle because he is not always in the ring. In the Chamber the battle is joined, but the indispensable preparations are made elsewhere. Upstairs that evening, I believe, there were *two* unofficial Committees about a hundred strong in session. Why? Because there is only one Chamber, and only one thing can be discussed at a time in it. And if everyone sat in the Chamber and listened to Monday's debate about begonias nobody would be ready for the Asparagus Bill on Tuesday, or the Beetroot resolution on Wednesday. Indeed, Ridiculous Elector, if all the Members were to sit and listen to all the debates the Parliamentary machine would break down at once. Thrust that solemn thought into your skull, if you can, and ponder it.

"I think," said Poker, still fuming slightly, "that I heard you mutter 'smoking-rooms.' Very well, come into the strange place which I call the Aquarium, the only smoking-room to which Strangers are admitted. See that little group in the corner, knee-deep in Order Papers and volumes of statutes? They are going through the latest amendments to the Work (Elimination) Bill and planning their course of action for the meeting of a Standing Committee on Thursday morning. Some of them were here at 10.30 for this morning's meeting and will be here till eleven or twelve to-night. Not far off is a similar group. And so far, observe, there is no refreshment on the table.

"I cannot take you into the other smoking-room, for Members of the House of Lords are the only foreign bodies permitted in that holy place. But there too the nation's work never ceases; there too about nine in every ten legislators are talking shop—amendments, resolutions, round-robins, points of procedure, plots and plans. Here the Elder Statesman instructs the New Boy; here the wild foes learn to understand each other; here the great tides of opinion begin to flow. It is one of the most important places in the world. So let's have no more sneering about 'smoke-rooms,' please.

"Yes, you may peep into the great Library, Foul Voter; and here again you can see dozens of your poor slaves toiling for you, though they are not sitting in the Chamber listening to speeches. What are they doing? They are swotting up a speech for to-morrow; or more likely they are answering hundreds of delightful letters from *you*; or possibly they are concocting a speech to deliver to *you* in the constituency on Friday night; or they are writing to the Minister of Pensions or Labour about *you*; or they are painfully drafting a Question to the Home Secretary about some absurd grievance of *yours*. And just as they are getting it right *you*, Ridiculous Elector, send in a Green Card requesting an interview. And there you are, waiting to relate your life-story or expecting strawberries and tea on the Terrace!

"All very well—and no doubt your Member loves to see you; but if you want him to sit in the Chamber all the time he'll have to renounce that pleasure, stop answering your delightful letters, opening your thrilling bazaars, speaking at your dinners, asking your questions, and badgering the Government departments for you.



"APPARENTLY THIS FELLOW HITLER MAKES QUITE A PRACTICE OF SHOOTING FOXES."



THE BRITISH CHARACTER

A TENDENCY TO TAKE THINGS TO PIECES.

And you wouldn't like that, Queer Creature, would you?

"Slackers, indeed!" said Poker. "Why, you don't know what work *is*! When you see that your Member has been up having an All-Night Sitting you say 'Dam nonsense!' and, as a rule, you're right. But what you *don't* notice is the number of normal nights when he's there till 11.30 or 12 or later. Watch that, Vile Voter, especially later in the Session. And, finally, may I distantly refer to the trivial detail that in most cases the poor fish has got to earn a living as well?"

"But you get *four hundred a* YEAR!" I told him sturdily.

"Four hundred a year!" said Poker. "Why, it costs us that to answer your delightful letters. Not to mention the strawberries." A. P. H.

Really

If it *really* rained cats and dogs
While waves were mountains high;
If there were *really* pea-soup fogs
Or *really* a leaden sky;

If one were *really* as thin
As a lath or as weak as a rat,
Or *really* as ugly as sin
Or as a pancake flat,

Or *really* as strong as a horse,
Or *really* rolling in money,
The world would go on all the same of course,
But wouldn't the world be funny?

A. W. B.

Trouble Brewing?

"Inevitably the big tea importers and tea merchants are getting into hot water."
Sunday Paper.

Amazing Horticultural Discovery

"Many people have found it beneficial, when sowing grass seed, to keep the sparrows away."—*Extract from Directions on Tin.*

Leila's Alarming Experience

". . . They had hardly got into the skipper's cabin when a tremendous pitch on the steamer sent Donald and Leila rolling together on the floor. Before she could be got under control again and headed into the wind, she had lurched stern first into a mountainous comber, and shipped hundreds of tons of water. Then her nose went down and her tail went up, and for a moment it was a question if she would right herself. A wriggle and a roll and she saved herself."
From a Novel.

Tall Hats and Holidays

THE other day I counted forty-two top-hats from end to end of the stretch of pavement which fronts the National Gallery. I was sitting on the upper deck of a bus at the time, which is of course by far the best place from which to look at top-hats: one sees the glossy upper surface with the fascinating concentric circles of its nap—a sight denied, unless he be unusually tall, to the man in the street. There is also the simple pleasure of not being able to see too much of the face of the wearer.

This is not the place to inquire into the reasons why a top-hat is so irresistibly comic; we must simply accept the fact that to most people it is so. But I remember reflecting, as I watched this splendid free show, that in all probability the majority of the men under these hats saw nothing funny about them at all. If you have lived all your life in the company of top-hats, if you have been born, more or less, with a top-hat on your head, you soon lose, I suppose, all sense of wonder at it. You look on it as just another item of attire, like trousers. Which is one more added to the innumerable disadvantages of being rich. The wealthy lead such dull grey lives.

I confess that there have been occasions, one or two, when I have myself worn such a hat; but I have never owned one. These things can be arranged. I take my place proudly in the ranks of non-top-hat owners and retain inviolate the ability to laugh at the things. Naturally, if circumstances, relations or simple ambition ever compel me to the purchase of a topper I shall join with equal pride the opposing forces. But even so I hope not to become altogether blasé. I shall try always to remember the old bourgeois days. I shall set my face resolutely against that last infirmity of noble mind, the refusal to believe that people exist who do *not* possess a topper. Some years ago I inadvertently met a man of enormous wealth who asked me whether I had a yacht, and when I said, No, I hadn't, replied, "Oh, you don't care for the sea?" I didn't tell him I hadn't got a top-hat either, because that might have unsettled him. He would have thought I was some kind of crank or perhaps suffered from a disease of the scalp which made the wearing of tall hats inadvisable.

However, we are wandering from the point, which is that the sight of all this shining headgear outside the National Gallery reminded me forcibly of the advent of spring. There is an old country saying that the sweet o' the year has arrived when you can tread three daisies under your foot at once (it comes earlier of course for size twelves than for the man of modest standing), and I felt very strongly that something of the sort must hold good of top-hats. Spring, I said to myself, has surely arrived when you can knock off six top-hats in Trafalgar Square with a single sweep of the arm. Rationally, I know, the thing is not true. There can as easily be a wedding at St. Martin's-in-the-Fields in November as in February. I am simply telling you what I said to myself as I travelled on top of a bus past the National Gallery. And perhaps, now I come to think of it, the idea is not so fantastic after all. Nobody feels like knocking off top-hats in November; but on a bright February day, when the birds are singing—ah! then there is no telling what even a middle-aged man's fancy may lightly turn to. Let me off the bus, conductor; I have work to do.

I don't seriously wish my top-hats to usurp the position of the daisies. They would be as false harbingers as the yellow crocus, which annually misleads us into premature hopes of spring and is very properly eaten by the birds. March lies in wait, whatever the omens say. What is the use of hoping for warm and sunny days when April and even May are likely to see the roads impassable with snow? What, if it comes to that, is the use of spring at all to the toiling townsman? The buds may be bursting and the catkins having kittens down in Kent; we see precious little of it in the Brompton Road. All we get, apart from a certain greenness in the Parks, is a genuine hatred of work and a feeling of listlessness which sends the sales of patent medicines rocketing to the skies. We choke back our sobs and pray for August.

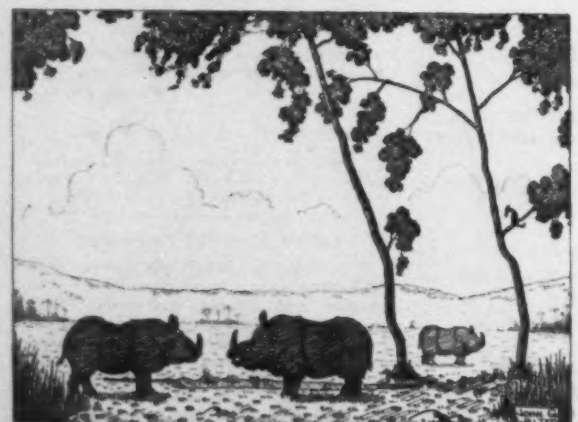
Not the crocus nor the daisy pied is the portent we greet so eagerly. The Advance List of Holiday Arrangements is the harbinger for our money. When the Manager bursts out in a new tie, when it is possible to cover three Baedekers on the Chief Accountant's desk with a single ledger, when a livelier Iris types our letters to the Branch, then is the time to look for spring in our hearts. Very soon we too shall be treading on the daisies.

Here is an interesting thought. Supposing, for the striking off of six top-hats with one blow of the arm, we substitute the taking in of a thousand top-hats with a single blow of the eye? Wouldn't that be a reliable sign, even for the Londoner, that the best of the year was at hand? I think it would. For the Ascot meeting is in June, and where else but at Ascot could a man hope to witness such a sight? At a Buckingham Palace Garden Party, you say? Well, well, I know nothing of such matters. But I do know that at Ascot you would be sure of your thousand, and maybe of your ten thousand, on a fine Gold Cup day. I may possibly run down there this year and take a census.

I counted them at break of day,
And when the sun set where were they?

Back in the Hiring Department, most of them, wearing their crowns out with sick longing for the wedding-bells.

H. F. E.



"OF COURSE I REALISE THAT YOU FIND HER ATTRACTIVE, MY BOY, BUT DON'T FORGET THAT BEAUTY IS ONLY SKIN DEEP."

"Berlin, Thursday.

German soldiers are to be provided with lighter steel helmets. In future they will weigh from 2 lb. to 2¼ lb., according to the size of the head, this being half-a-pound lighter than hitherto."

Daily Paper.

But of course no soldier ventures to have a lighter head than the FÜHRER'S.

Love on the Air

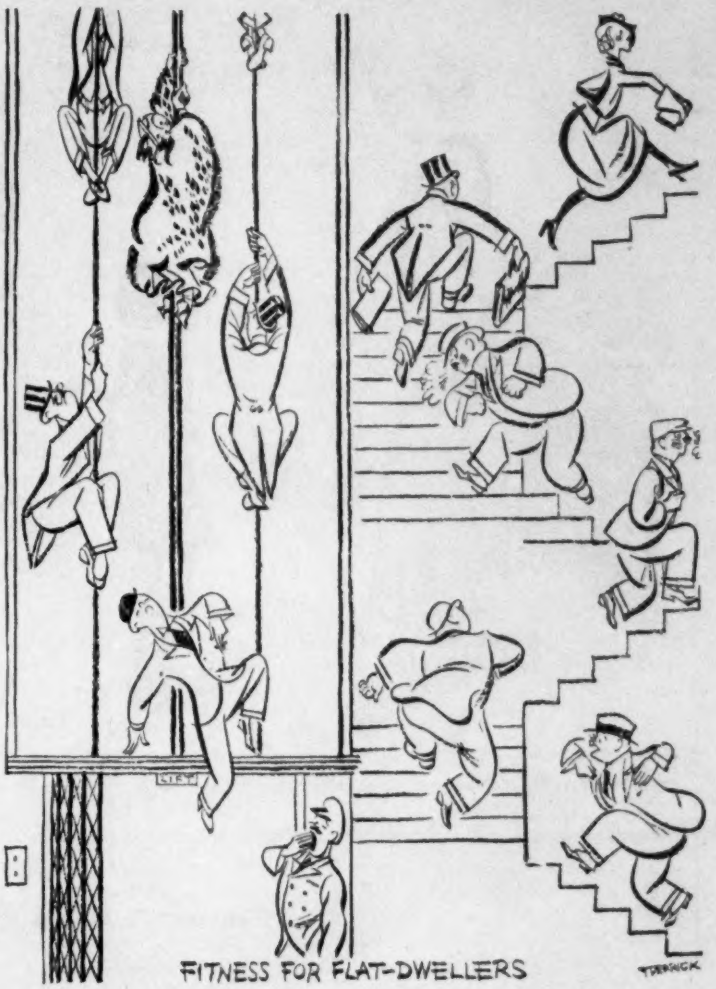
IT is now a fortnight or so since Mr. HAROLD HULEN, of Excelsior Springs, Missouri, wooed Miss FLORENCE HURLBUT, also of that parish, by the novel method of padlocking himself to a radiator in her apartment. In these two weeks the couple's romance has been lost to those on this side of the Atlantic. But Mr. HULEN'S last words to a reporter before he left the front-pages, perhaps for ever, are still clear in my mind. You will remember that the lady of his choice was persuaded to give her answer to his suit through a nation-wide radio hook-up. When the poetic Miss HURLBUT finally murmured into the microphone, "I guess it's 'Yes,'" Mr. HULEN'S reactions were not at all those you would expect from a great lover. He sang no pæan of joy now, although he had passed those weary padlocked hours crooning love-songs. He did not go out and slay a dragon, or even the janitor who, sensing instinctively the dramatic need for a villain in the piece, turned the steam-heat to 212 degrees Fahr. during HAROLD'S lovelorn vigil. No; he merely said: "Gee, that 's swell! Maybe now I'll get a chance on the air with the radiator company to sponsor me."

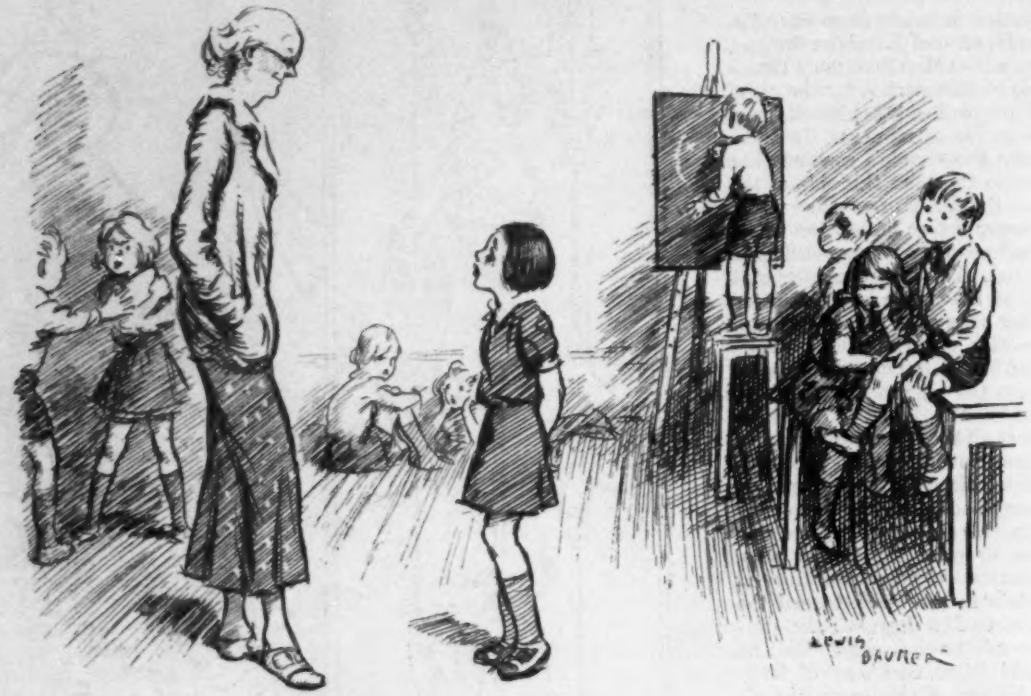
I wonder if he has got his break? Certainly commerce knows that there is no appeal to compare with Love, properly publicised, in the hearts of the masses. America will no doubt become so radiator-conscious that it will soon be hard to find a man, woman or child who is decentrally heated. But there are other lovers in the States besides HAROLD and FLORENCE. They may be less spectacular, but they will be brought in hordes to the radio stations to do their little bit. Already I can hear the pleasantly-modulated tones of an American announcer calling: "We are now about to introdooce to you Luigi Carimera, of Kansas City, who will render his one and only lifelike impression of a dog chasing a park-keeper. It is by means of this stoopendous piece of mimicry that Luigi is able to keep dates with his dame on any park bench in Kansas without fear of interruption. This boy owes his success in love, however, not only to his vocal artistry but also to the unparalleled comfort of 'Sit-tite' benches, manufactured by the Regal Upholstery Corp., Inc., by whose courtesy this program comes to you."

And again: "Now, folks, we have a swell surprise for you to-night. William McGee, eighty-nine-year-old Romeo of Badger's Pine, Cal., will recite to you the authentic words with which he won his bride, eighty-two-year-old Annie Dobbs, a week ago. Owing to a trifling deafness on the lady's part he was obliged to tell of his passion on a considerably higher key than the mike will stand for. He is going to pipe down a spot, therefore, but, believe us, he is none the less genuine for that. Remember, folks, that had it not been for Robinson's Throat-building Pastilles, who are giving you William McGee to-night, he could never have made the grade and won his woman's heart."

Nothing can stop the idea growing. Men with an eye on dubious fathers-in-law will so arrange their proposals that they need have no fear of a thunderous "How can you afford to keep my daughter?" Pat will come the airy reply, "Well, I have a series of six talks, entitled 'In My Hour of Need,' to give for the Holdhigh Suspender Co. That will tide over my early marriage expenses. Then I expect to make my regular income from Higgins' Shaving Cream. They have booked me for a weekly chat on the progress of my wedded life, to be continued unless and until divorce proceedings are instituted."

Excelsior Springs will in the future point proudly to a statue of HAROLD HULEN, sitting manacled, in the main square. Yet I feel anxious for this still pioneer. He should have slain that janitor, who must be still lurking somewhere in the background, probably trying to charge HAROLD rent. If he gives evidence of what the prisoner said about steam-heat when it was turned to "Boiling" I would give pretty short odds against the radiator company tearing up his contract.





New Pupil (to Head of very modern school). "BUT PLEASE DO I ALWAYS HAVE TO DO EXACTLY WHAT *I* WANT TO DO?"

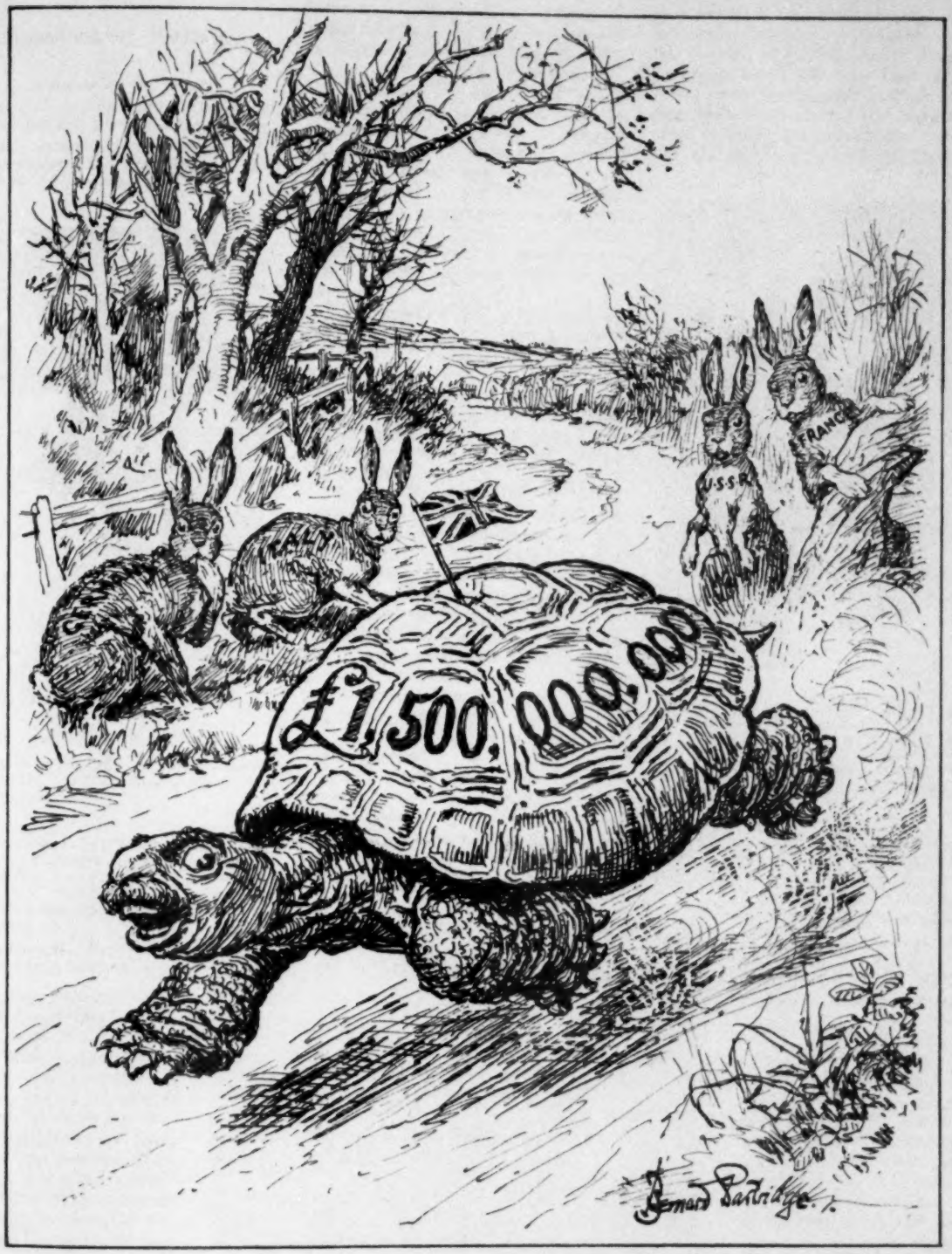
The Fisherman's Fly-Book

HERE in my fly-book, gay and sober,
Lords of the lochan and river lie,
Almost forgotten since last October,
Busked in full plumage, both "wet" and "dry."
Each jaunty hook with a vision in it,
Days blue and gold on the Tweed or Spey,
Flood-laden burns on the hills near Dinnet,
Rain (around Moidart) and mist (Glenveagh).

See! here's the wreck of a Greenwell's Glory
Lost from a wide-awake Leven prize;
There a Pale Dun with a blither story—
Four fighting grilse from an evening rise.
Faith! how their names make the heart grow bigger—
Red Quill and Alder and prim Iron Blue,
Cinnamon, Coachman and Tilton's Nigger—
Patterns of every shade and hue.

Over the page come the Teals and Palmers
(Scent of the peat by the loughs of Clare);
Next are the Mallards, those tested charmers,
Each one so dainty and debonair;
Lastly (the big 'uns) grim Silver Doctor,
Bright Durham Ranger and gay Gled Wing—
Shades of the past at (pre-War) Drumochter—
Wilkinson, Jock Scott and Purple King.

Beauties! your slender wings a-quiver,
Ready, aye ready to "cast" your lot
Into the rushing and tumbling river,
Over the "tail" or the boiling "pot."
Toast to the future, then, days to treasure,
June-end in Ross-shire, that's understood—
So to fair fortune, to hours of leisure,
And above all may the sport be good! G. C. N.



THE TORTOISE GOES WILD

THE HARES. "GREAT HEAVENS! IF HE GOES ON LIKE THAT WE SHALL HAVE TO CALL THE RACE OFF."

Impressions of Parliament

Synopsis of the Week

***Monday, February 15th.*—Commons: Factories Bill given Second Reading.**

***Tuesday, February 16th.*—Lords: Architects Registration and Regency Bills considered in Committee.**



JACK COMES UP SMILING.

With Mr. Punch's fraternal greetings to Mr. Jack Jones on his return to Westminster.

Commons: Statutory Salaries Considered in Committee.

***Wednesday, February 17th.*—Lords: Debate on Application of Mandate System to British Colonies.**

Commons: Debate on Finances of Defence.

Monday, February 15th.—The recent meeting between Lord Halifax and Herr Ribbentrop has given rise, as was inevitable, to rumours that a transfer of Colonies to Germany was being considered, but Lord Cranborne assured Commander Locker-Lampson this afternoon that the conversation in question was no more than a routine exchange of views on a number of topics; and in reply to Mr. Adams he stated once again that no such transfer was contemplated by the Government.

The B.B.C., not usually thought to be particularly *avant-garde* either in art or politics, is being attacked in the House by a group of Tory Members who contrive to perceive in its presentation of news and its educational broadcasts the horrid machinations of the Comintern. The P.M.G. has already rejected the absurd suggestion that the B.B.C.'s Parliamentary reports should be submitted to the Whips of each Party before being broadcast, and this afternoon he begged that critical Members should read the actual scripts instead of accounts of them in the papers.

The Factories Bill, which got its Second Reading, has been generally admitted to contain big advances towards the safety and welfare of workers, but this evening's debate showed that the feeling that young people might still be overworked was not by any means confined to the Socialist benches.

Tuesday, February 16th.—What is an architect? When the Architects Registration Bill was taken in the Upper House to-day Lord Strabolgi moved to confine its privileges to those who designed and supervised, in the capacity of designer, the erection of buildings. This sounded very well until Lord Crawford pointed out that it would have denied qualification to Sir Aston Webb, in spite of his achievement in bringing the dome of St. Paul's to a standstill after it had begun to wander.

The Commons discussed the Government's proposal to raise the salaries of County Court Judges and Metropolitan Police Magistrates by £350 a year, and this was agreed to, although several Socialists condemned the increase as an injustice to the unemployed. The Solicitor-General explained that the salaries of County Court Judges had stood at £1,500 since 1865, when it was easier to get good men for that sum than it was now, and that the great increase not only in their work but also in the cost of living was not fairly represented by the bonus of £150 which remained to them from a bigger bonus allowed during the War.



THROWING DOWN THE GAUNTLET

"The Chancellor's proposal was of such a startling character that it would call forth a direct challenge from the Opposition."

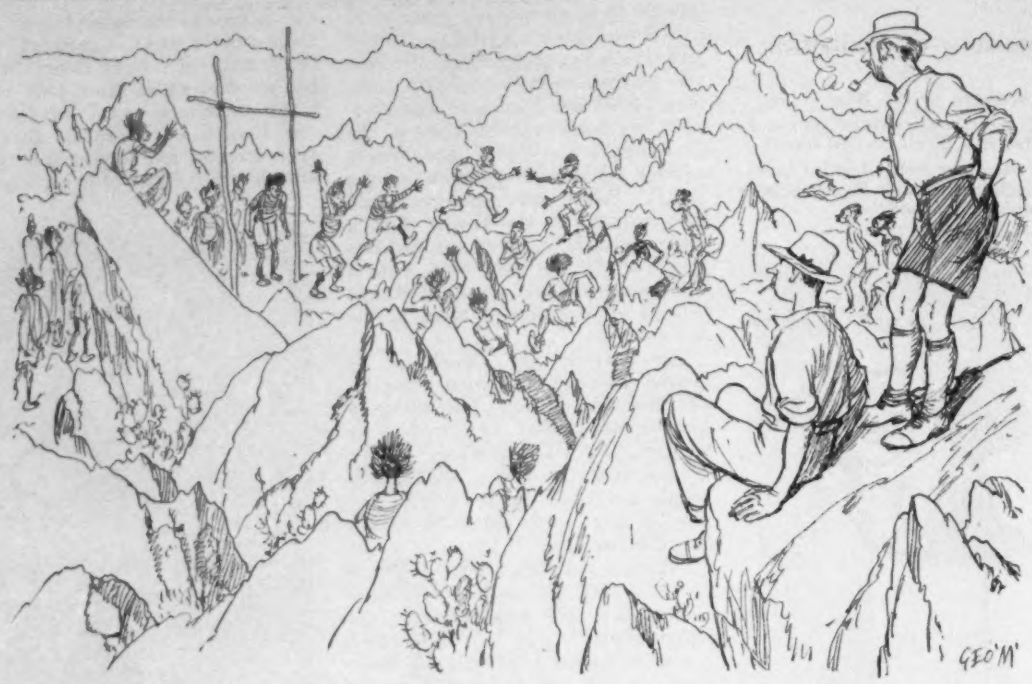
Mr. Patrick-Lawrence in the Debate on Defence.



A BIRD IN THE HAND

"Factory workers would prefer to accept the Bill rather than to wait for years for what was not yet attainable."—*Sir Kingsley Wood in reply to Mr. Greenwood.*

Wednesday, February 17th.—Claiming that opposition to his motion would arise from out-of-date ideas of prestige, Lord Noel-Buxton moved in the Upper House that Germany should be allowed to return to the African Colonial system with a mandate from the League. Wider markets, within her own currency scheme, were an important part of Germany's colonial claims; mandation was a British invention, and Empires which had treated their colonies as private estates had passed away. Lord Lugard, who was unable to believe that the Colonial Powers would be willing to surrender their sovereignty, then moved an



"IT WAS ORIGINALLY RUGBY, BUT THE PHYSICAL CONFORMATION OF THE COUNTRY COMPELLED US TO DEVELOP OUR OWN TECHNIQUE."

amendment which supported the principle of equal economic advantages while eliminating the need for a mandate.

Both these views found sympathy with Lord ARNOLD, who condemned the Ottawa Agreements as a violation of the principle of equal trading which might contain the seeds of the downfall of the British Empire, and to a limited extent with Lord CREWE; but Lord LLOYD, emphasising the weakness of Germany's economic claim, which ignored the insignificance of her commercial relations with her Colonies before the War, insisted that what she wanted now was not freer trade but a protected market which she could keep to herself. And on the ground of prestige, why, he asked, should Germany be given Colonies any more than Poland, Czechoslovakia or Russia?

Lord CRANWORTH confessed that two years ago he would have recommended the return of Tanganyika, but that the militarism of the Fascist Powers had forced him to alter his opinion; and in reply Lord PLYMOUTH objected that the proposal would entail the complete reorganisation of the Colonial system and raise innumerable difficulties, that the policy of the open door was not what Germany wanted, and that England was already the principal source of Germany's supplies on free exchange for the purchase of raw materials. Far from helping European countries which had a higher labour standard, an "open-door" policy would give immense advantages to Eastern industry, and particularly to that of Japan.

The Commons debate on the finances of defence proved disappointing, for to Mr. CHAMBERLAIN's carefully-argued survey of his intentions the Opposition could only retort that politically the White Paper was "a tragic farce" and that technically the Government's proposals to raise huge sums by loan rather than taxation were improper because they would result in higher prices and a serious slump. Sir ARCHIBALD SINCLAIR for the Liberals did not go so far, but strongly criticised the Government for taking no notice of the Royal Commission's finding that control of armament prices was inadequate, and condemned the CHANCELLOR for making no mention of the League or Collective Security—at which Mr. CHAMBERLAIN rose to remind him that the debate was concerned with the finances of rearmament.

In his reply Mr. CHAMBERLAIN explained that an added reason for borrowing, beside the valid argument that heavy taxation produced bad psychological effects, was that the bills of the social services had become such a heavy annual item.



OUR BACK-BENCH *WHO'S WHO*

There are three members named
STRAUSS
In the Hauss.
Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL
Won N. Lambeth after a tussell.

Prettier Shorthorns

"I congratulate Mr. Hubert Welch, of Christchurch, and Mr. A. B. Hewitt, of Lymington, on their election as members of the Council of the Royal Counties Agricultural Society, at the annual meeting held Saturday next, inclusive, to advise on make-up and beauty treatment."—*Hampshire Paper.*

Easy Reckoning

Our village, owing to its geographical situation, has surrendered its individuality very slightly to the mechanical age. It is true we have a filling station and that motor-cars are abroad, but the butcher, the grocer and the baker still deliver their goods with pony power and the village inn is not yet transfigured into an hotel.

Last week the well-ordered wheels of our life slipped a cog. Miss Phoebe of Old House died. For longer than the oldest inhabitant could remember she had directed the political economy of the village. The sharpness of her tongue had been well known to transgressors for several generations, but her beginnings were lost in ancient history and her age, a well-kept secret, had supplied as much controversy as her activities. On the evening following her death a full meeting of the village wise-heads gathered in the bar-parlour of the "Saracen's Head" determined to make a final pronouncement.

"Say as you will," said old Luke Belcher, "but I count Miss Phoebe was nigh on a hunderd. My father told me how when he wer a lad hedgin' in Lower Wash, she, a grown woman, jumped that fence when hounds wer runnin' an' jumped he too. Pretty near scared to death he wer."

"That don't get us nowhere, Luke," said Mr. (always Mr.) Rushton, the gamekeeper. "She might ha' bin twenty or she might ha' bin thirty when she jumped that fence, an' some of 'em, even in them days, was grown women at sixteen."

"Sims to me we want a bit' o' 'rithmetic," said Dick Smoothy. "Now I rekkerlects in the summer when I took on as carter at Hulbush Farm ther wer all sorts o' doin's. There wer fireworks an' a barrel o' beer on the Green. A fair old dovercourt it wer. An' I say that wer Miss Phoebe's twenty-first birthday, but how long ago it wer I be darned if I know."

"'Twern't nothin o' the kind," exclaimed old Luke. "That wer Queen Victoria's Jubilee. You be as fuddled now as you wer that night."

"You don't sim to be gettin' no furder," said Peter Whiffen. "Now you listen to what I tell 'ee. Last year Foxburrer Field wer o' wheat and the 'leven acres wi' barley. Now they come that way every eight year. Yer foller that? Well, it do so 'appen that once every forty year when Foxburrer 's ter wheat and 'leven acres ter barley, Dial Field be a clover ley. 'Twer Miss Phoebe herself told me that one day when I wer a boy makin' bonds down at Griffon's Chase. 'Tis forty year, Peter,' she said, 'since crops wer as they be to-day, an' I just remembers picking white clover in Dial Field.' Now I calkerlate Miss Phoebe wer forty-five year old when she spoke ter me that day. Mebbe a year more or less, but 'tis about that. So ye see it ain't so gallus orkard as ye all thort it was."

"That do make it more simple, Peter," said Mr. Rushton, "an' if you tell us jus' how old you be now ther don't sim ter be no difficulty 'bout Miss Phoebe's age."

"That I can't do, Mr. Rushton. My mother she had it all writ on the wall, but the plaster cum down in the winter when Mr. Speakman's ship all died that snow, and now I don't be sure whether I be sixty-eight or seventy-eight."

"Well, that don't matter," said Luke Belcher; "'tis certain Miss Phoebe wer 'bout five year old when Foxburrer wer o' wheat and 'leven acres o' barley and Dial Field down ter clover, an' I don't see ther be anything more certain than that ter say how old Miss Phoebe wer."

* * * * *

I, only a humble and inarticulate listener, have not yet succeeded in working the sum. I hand it on to you.



"Now, do you really think it would be fair if I told you where it is?"

At the Play

"CANDIDA" (GLOBE)

"A PLAY," says Mr. BERNARD SHAW characteristically in a programme-note, "that will not last forty years and be all the better for it is not worth writing." This is an ambitious test, since it is in just about forty years, or a little more than the distance of one generation, that even the technical merits of a good play can be most obscured by what has changed in mode and manner; yet it is one through which this play comes intact.

For *Candida* herself is still, to whatever profession she may be wife, an easily recognisable figure of lasting significance: the woman who is so much more clever than her successful husband that she is content to be compensated for his failure to recognise her superior intelligence by the private satisfaction of knowing that it is his uncomprehending vanity which enables her to settle vital issues as she wishes. There must have been prominent cave-dwellers in earlier times who would have paled under their woad to be told that they were lords of the old red sandstone not on account of any personal measurements or cunning but simply because the docile fur-clad lady crouching over their breakfast casserole possessed an unrivalled intellectual grip of the subtleties of paleolithic politics; presumably there will always be men in this not unenviable position, and they will certainly be found in all spheres of life.

There is nothing exaggerated about the *Rev. James Morrell*, *Candida's* husband, for Mr. SHAW took care to make him a decent, hearty, hard-working fellow with sufficient character to be of advanced political opinion; a long-term bore if you like, admittedly too busy to do much thinking and too far gone in conviction ever to try to see things as they really were, but a pleasant enough fellow in short-ish doses. Nor are any of the characters anything but roundly and truly drawn, and the joints of the play are fitted together with consummate skill. It is first and foremost a great comedy with a precision of effect so rare in the modern theatre that at any cost it should be seen.

Miss ANN HARDING, of screen fame, whose *Candida* is well known in America, played the part in a way which I liked more and more as the play proceeded, though to begin with I felt that her cool, calm, almost commanding manner would make too little unexpected her firmness in the last scene. But this proved a small point beside the admirable force and sympathy with which she seized the final situation and delivered the long and very difficult speeches which are the essence of the play's meaning. (Few heroines can have so little to do in their first two Acts as *Candida* and yet so dominate their Third.) In light passages she is inclined to be stiff, but on the whole her performance is notably good.



TENSE MOMENT AT THE PARSONAGE

Eugène Marchbanks . . . . . MR. STEPHEN HAGGARD
Candida . . . . . MISS ANN HARDING
The Rev. James Mavor Morrell . MR. NICHOLAS HANNEN

Mr. NICHOLAS HANNEN'S *Morrell* is unimpeachable except for the one criticism that his personality is so genuine that he was unable quite to dispel the feeling that he would have shown *Marchbanks* the door pretty early in the play, and would anyway have put up a more resolute self defence at the end. But he plays the part with fine understanding, and never lets its spiritual back-slapping run away with him into farce.

Mr. STEPHEN HAGGARD'S *Marchbanks* is very good indeed, and the strength of his performance lies in the fact that while he convinces us that his amorous poet is right, he makes us long at the same time to kick him hard and compel him to slice the onions which, until nicely cooked and set before him, he despises. Mr. HAGGARD'S acting is full of variety and is still improving.



THE WIDE-AWAKE SECRETARY

Miss Proserpine Garnett
MISS ATHENE SEYLER

The three minor characters are equally well taken. Miss ATHENE SEYLER'S *Prossy* is magnificently comic, and for one moment magnificently tragic; Mr. EDWARD CHAPMAN'S tough old Yorkshire business-man is a capital sketch, and Mr. GEOFFREY EDWARDS' *Curate* is an exact picture of a type still, unfortunately, to be found.

For the general excellence of the production Miss IRENE HENTSCHEL must take great credit.

It is nice to find a curtain-raiser, but Mr. THORNTON WILDER'S little piece, *Love and How to Cure It*, is too slight in point to prelude such a satisfactory evening. ERIC.

"The Road to Ruin"
(Ambassadors)

"The thing, the goal, the stare, the gape, the gaze." These words, with which the exuberant *Goldfinch* communicates to the rich widow *Warren* the pleasures of driving four-in-hands may be applied to the whole of the superb production of Holcroft's *The Road to Ruin* at Ambassadors Theatre, for which we are all now hopelessly in debt to Mr. Sydney Carroll. This famous old comedy has been touched up in the same careful way that Old Masters are renovated. The intention has been to let the great merits of the original show to full advantage, and the intention is achieved.

The play is in the old generous tradition, with plenty of characters, plenty of scenes and rather an excess of action. From the first moment, when we see old *Mr. Dornton* (Mr. Baliol Holloway) sitting up at night for young *Dornton* (Mr. Alec Clunes), we live in full crisis. Holcroft was full of observation of character, and Mr. Holloway builds on his lines a first-rate performance of a father continually vacillating between firmness and indulgence. But these psychological fine points are easily lost sight of as we are swept breathlessly along. From the first scene of the First Act it is a question of time whether the great banking-house of *Dornton* can be saved. The same dash which has made young *Dornton* sow so many wild oats in record time drives him to the work of rescue, and, panting and out of breath, we follow him to the money-lender's parlour and the rich widow's drawing-room. The money-lender, *Mr. Silky*, an "eke most lovely Jew," though no longer a brisky juvenal, is an enormous pleasure to listen to as he unfolds his sinuous hypocrisies, but there is so much to be done, for *Mr. Silky* has some hard and crooked bargains—with £50,000 at stake—to drive.

Our regret that we have not the leisure to see more of him and his methods is intensified when we reach the widow, for Miss Sydney Fairbrother gives such a performance of the vain middle-aged *Mrs. Warren* as makes us wish the whole evening could be spent in her house, watching the tremendous gusto with which she fights her lonely, undaunted, impossible battles. She has her dignity, and into the businesslike *Mr. Sulky* (Mr. Franklin Dyall), a partner in Dornton and Co., she can pour broadsides like this: "You are a very intrusive person. You derange my ideas. I can think of nothing soft and satisfactory while you are here." She is quite clear that she wants to marry young *Dornton* and not young *Goldfinch* (Mr. Sydney Bromley), and she shows good taste. There is a tremendous heartiness about *Goldfinch*. It is moving that anybody should get as much pleasure out of life as he does out of the Turf and the road and incessant betting on every issue that can be framed in terms of odds. But there is much more to *Harry Dornton*,



APPROPRIATELY NAMED

Mr. Silky . . . . . Mr. Frank Cochrane
Mr. Sulky . . . . . Mr. Franklin Dyall

and Mr. Clunes is exactly the right actor for the part, making equally credible his vast dissolute faults and his very real qualities.

This is an old-fashioned play, and virtue is rewarded and vice punished, and *Harry Dornton* carries off the hand of the lovely *Sophia*, a part played by Miss Lesley Wareing with great distinction. The danger of eighteenth-century heroines is that there is nothing in them but their virtuous innocence, but Miss Wareing showed us a *Sophia* full of character and as far removed from the doll-like type as anyone so beautiful could be.

It is a serious reflection on the taste of present-day playgoers that a play so full of excellencies as this should suffer the injustice of a swift withdrawal.

D. W.

"Macbeth" (O.U.D.S.)
(New Theatre, Oxford)

The O.U.D.S. production of *Macbeth* suffered from a difficult medley of styles. The rapid succession of scenes on the higher or lower plane of the stage, in front of suddenly-dropped curtains or suddenly-lighted recesses, suggested a Cochran revue; the *Witches*, in white rubber masks, looked hygienic but not Shakespearean; for the costumes Mr. Irvine had chosen a strange adaptation of Viking war dress. Mr. Hunt's set consisted of two intersecting causeways with an oasthouse-shaped tower, the back of which afforded no crevice for the temple-haunting martlet. The cast, in defiance of their symbolic background, seemed determined to deliver their lines as quickly and conversationally as possible. As the play had been considerably cut—not perhaps judiciously, for the murder of *Banquo*, which was omitted, has a high dramatic value, and the scene between *Malcolm* and *Macduff* very little—haste was scarcely necessary. It certainly had a restricting effect upon Mr. John Witty's interpretation of *Macbeth*. The most clearly-marked pattern of the tragedy is in the diverse developments of *Macbeth* and *Lady Macbeth*, as he hardens from hysteria to defiance and she weakens from her boldness to haunted weariness. Miss Margaret Rawlings gave a memorable and wholly sympathetic version of her part and took over it the time it demands, but the effect was weakened by the much too hurried acting of Mr. Witty; Shakespeare's soliloquies do not become unimportant through familiarity and should be given every ounce of their rhetorical value rather than muttered from the back of the stage. This was more regrettable since Mr. Witty obviously has the power for a much stronger interpretation, if given the occasion, and presented, as it was, an excellent impression of sombre ferocity.

In the minor parts Mr. Willoughby Gray gave a polished performance as *Banquo*; but a contrast worth making, between the dignity of *Duncan's* reign and the growing chaos of *Macbeth's*, was lessened by the miscasting of Mr. Robin Brayne as *Duncan*. Mr. Michael Denison as *Macduff* was resolute, but hampered by an unfortunate wig and eyebrows.

Dorcas

After years of opposition I am at last the owner of a cat.

For more reasons than one, I had steadily opposed the idea. One of the reasons was that my dog would suspect, on my part, divided allegiance and resent it. Dogs can be very jealous, and this feeling, which implies loyalty, should not be treated lightly. Loyalty is not so prevalent as all that.

Another reason was that the presence of a cat would disturb the birds and very likely drive them away; and as it is, there are not too many. I personally prefer one robin, one thrush, one blackbird, to many cats, and I have always said so.

A third reason was that the canary would be made uneasy, and I should hate that. It is bad enough to be kept in a cage, without any added discomfort or anxiety. Besides, the canary is a treasured gift.

The other reason—and probably a sufficient one—was, that I don't like cats. I prefer to their oriental stealth and subtleties the blunt legible occidentalisms of the dog.

All the same, the house was gradually being overrun by mice, and traps seemed to be of no avail. There were mice in every cranny and every wall, and, at night, mice gnawing the planks with such persistence that at any moment one felt that the place might collapse. There were several mice who, regularly at four A.M., used to get their teeth into a board just above my head; and as at that hour any ordinary noise is magnified several times, there was no chance of sleep. Apart from the disquieting menace to the building, there was the din. Moreover, to wake and ponder then is to see the future in its worst colours.

Mice, of course, are now among the heroes of daily life: Walt Disney and the authors of countless stories for children have seen to that; but mice in films and picture-books, all dressed up and full of innocent and endearing fun, to be laughed at in cinemas and nurseries, are very different from the pestilent little creatures who corrupt and destroy our homes. Something had to be done.

I therefore gave way and consented to have a cat.

The first step was to make inquiries; but here I met with no satisfaction. This neighbour had known of one, last week—a very good one too, a tortoise-shell—but it had gone to the Vicarage, where the mice had been something terrible; that neighbour could have supplied me with a beauty a month ago—a fine mouser she was, no mistake—but it was now too late. In fact, everybody said the same: if only I had let them know about it a little sooner.

I was, however, the recipient of much advice. "Get a she," said one neighbour: "they're always the best mousers." "Not one of them fancy ones," said another: "not a Show cat." "A farmhouse cat is what you want," said a third: "tabby for choice."

There was therefore nothing for it but to look up a livestock fancier in the Classified Telephone Book and pay him a visit; and this I did, in the nearest big town, that very afternoon.

It was the quickest shopping transaction of my life.

"I want a cat to catch mice," I said.

"Yes," said the girl, "I'll fetch one."

She descended through a trap-door in the floor and reappeared with a cat in her arms, a she, but not a tabby: pure black. As, however, it was warranted either to kill mice or to frighten them permanently off the premises, I asked the price.

"Half-a-crown," said the girl, and I paid the money and bore the assassin away. Had the girl said a guinea, I should have done the same. A cat had to be acquired.

Dorcas—for that is her name—is a nice cat, if such an adjective can be applied to a professional murderess; but everything that I dreaded is coming to pass. She has endearing ways; she is the perfection of silent grace; at unexpected moments she presses her face into my hand; she sits, not by invitation, but apparently through pure devotion, on my shoulder; she curls up in the armchairs and on the hearth-rug; she eats and drinks prettily, and, walking daintily amid bric-à-brac, she overturns nothing; but all that I fearingly foresaw is happening. The dog mopes in a corner, obviously nursing a nose that has been put out of joint; the canary's cage, once adjacent on a table, has had to be hung on a hook in the ceiling (safety first); while the garden is empty of birds.

There is no doubt of the cause, for I overheard a thrush and a robin talking about it this morning.

"It's useless relying on these fellows," said the thrush. "He's let us down."

"I was afraid so," said the robin, "when I saw her. At first I thought she might have been a stray, and I hoped so with all my heart; but no, I've found out about her: she's come to live here."

"Yes," said the thrush. "He's let us down. Our sense of security has gone. I shan't dare to build a nest here any more."

But Dorcas is catching mice like one-o'clock.

E. V. L.



". . . and I can tell from your voice that you're a thoroughly wrong number!"

Old Post Office Days

Well, so the Post Office station is definitely renamed St. Paul's now, and St. Paul's is renamed Blackfriars. (This news is not exactly fresh, I admit; but we Londoners are a conservative lot, and it takes us a little time to get used to things.) Blackfriars station, oddly enough, is also called Blackfriars; but the difficulty there is to think of anything else you could call it. Perhaps, on the analogy of the old St. Paul's station, you might call it Savoy Hill or Cannon Street; but why make difficulties?

With the passing of the name "Post Office" another of London's old landmarks has disappeared. There are not many of us left now who can recollect the opening of the station, performed by Queen Victoria herself, in the days when the Post Office in—er—in wherever it is the Post Office station is, was the only Post Office in London. Since then the spread of culture has led to the establishment of other Post Offices all over London, and the name, as a name for a station, has ceased to have any meaning. Besides, the L.P.T.B. were becoming increasingly perturbed at the number of people—provincials mostly—who tried to post letters in the ticket-machines.

Few who were present will forget the memorable scene at the opening ceremony. Queen Victoria, then a young girl, was accompanied by Lord Melbourne and Rowland Hill. Passing the barrier with a golden ticket the Queen pronounced "I declare this Post Office open." Whereupon Row-



Groom. "'TAIN'T NO MANNER O' GOOD YOU USING THE WHIP, SIR. BOB TRUMBLE, AS YOU BOUGHT 'ER FROM, JEST *swore* UN ALONG."

LAND HILL turned to her and wittily replied——

Well, I've forgotten what it actually *was* that he wittily replied; but in any case QUEEN VICTORIA was not amused, so perhaps after all it was not so witty as I thought.

This part of the ceremony being completed, they descended to the platform to watch the departure of the first train. (This was in the days of the old wooden ones.) As the royal party appeared the driver whipped up his horses and the train pulled slowly out of the station. Unfortunately at that time neither Chancery Lane station on one side nor Bank on the other had been built, so, as the royal party disappeared, the driver pulled up his horses and furtively backed into the station again. It is said that this is the only occasion when a West-bound train has entered Post Office station in an easterly direction—a record that is likely to stand for many years.

It is not generally known that Lord NELSON when a young man used to drive a train on this stretch of line. A remark that he made on one occasion has passed into history, though it is often attributed to a much later period in NELSON'S life.

The story goes that young NELSON was driving the 8.56 East-bound train —one of the old wooden ones—laden with City men anxious to get to their work. The train was already one minute and forty-eight seconds behind schedule, and young NELSON could sense an atmosphere of uneasiness among the magnates in the coaches behind him.

On rounding a bend about two hundred yards—or perhaps two-hundred-and-twenty yards—outside Chancery Lane station, the youth who was to grow up to be Lord NELSON perceived to his horror that the distant signal was against him. Thousands, millions perhaps, depended upon the punctual arrival of his train. In a flash he had made one of those decisions for which he was later to become world-famous. Pressing the dead-man's handle with his missing arm, the intrepid young man observed with grim jocularity, "I really do not see the signal."

By this brilliant stroke the train was brought into Post Office station exactly on time, and many thousand important business letters were opened that morning at nine o'clock that would not otherwise have been opened until five past. In those days of course the signal would have been one of the old wooden ones.

It is said that if QUEEN VICTORIA or Lord MELBOURNE or Captain COOK or somebody had heard of this exploit something or other would have happened in connection with NELSON'S subsequent career in the Navy; but I have unfortunately forgotten what it was.

That completes my recollections of the Post Office station, except for the time when I went in there one night after a cricket club dinner and found that the last train home had gone about ten minutes ago. I was accompanied on that occasion by two men called Wood and Steele, which has always struck me as something of a coincidence.

Perhaps next week the editor will let me tell you a little about my recollections of Blackfriars and St. Paul's stations.



"GOOD-BYE, MISS. IT'S VERY KIND OF YOU TO COME AND SEE AN OLD WOMAN LIKE ME."
"NOT AT ALL. I LIKE TO COME. BESIDES, YOU KNOW, IT'S LENT."

The Kenjon Peel

THE welcome stretch in the short days of winter brings no joy to the heart of Delia Byrne—only the realisation that the dreaded marmalade season is upon her. "The sorra long it'll be now," she tells herself, "till we have that lament-able ould Kenjon Peel." Ever since her first day in Miss Tracy's pleasant kitchen, where, as the awe-stricken and already home-sick wage-earner of a long family, she watched her employer cut up Seville oranges with infinite care, Delia has resented the marmalade season. For, being urged as she watched to look more closely still, she received in one eye a jet of acrid moisture that had a most disheartening effect upon one who was beginning to feel that from now on life must be a much more complicated affair. This feeling was deepened by the fact that when Miss Tracy turned her back for a moment the half-blinded newcomer plucked from the dish some thin slices of Seville orange and crammed them into her ever-ready mouth. "It isn't to say they didn't quinch me thirst," she told her admiring and sympathetic family on her first afternoon off, "but that I may never lie if they didn't actchilly fasten the dhrouth upon me."

Another indelible impression received at that time was that the correct name for this unutterably bitter rind requiring such careful handling was Kenjon Peel, and in her home circle this was accepted as just another of the oral peculiarities practised by the Quality. "Herself favours the Kenjon Peel," Mrs. Byrne said with an air of finality when her husband seemed inclined to press for an explanation.

Delia had so much to tell her family on those first free afternoons. Living as they did "on the hip of the bog," everything that happened in the big house in the village was regarded by them as news; every peculiarity of its owner was discussed frankly. "You can always know she's doin' something wid great nice-ety when she sings to herself," Delia told them; "but you'll only get a word here an' there, for she has a greatly muted way of singin' at anny time."

Ever since then, when the ingredients for marmalade are delivered at the kitchen-door, Delia has given notice. Just at first this ultimatum caused some uneasiness in the heart of her employer, who knew a good worker when she saw one. But, as the Byrne relations themselves say of this annual event, "Delia does it so regular now that the Misthress knows well 'tis got to be a sort of herry-dithery."

* * * * *

This year, however, the elderly man who delivers groceries about the village and who is still known as "Phelan's boy," brought with him two really satisfactory pieces of news. The first of these was that "there was no account at all of the Quoram;" and Delia knew that he referred to the small quantity of foreign cane-sugar now allowed to Irish shopkeepers whose customers insist that jam made with beet sugar will not "jell." Of



"WHAT I SAYS IS, MRS. JONES, THERE'S TOO MUCH OF THIS HERE VARIETY AND MOST OF IT'S ALL THE SAME."

Miss Tracy herself Mr. Phelan once said, "You might as well put a blisther upon a hedgehog as sthrive to bate her off of the Quoram."

The second piece of news was even more satisfying to Delia, for, according to Phelan's boy, there would be no Seville oranges in the village that spring "on account of the demur in Spain." Why this struggle should have anything to do with a shortage of marmalade oranges he did not know, but he had "heard it passed," he said.

And Delia felt a warm glow of sympathy with the fighters, known to her quite impartially as "them Insurgers." If they could keep Seville oranges from Miss Tracy they were not wasting their time after all. Then from a clear sky came the news that the fruit was even now on its way and that Mr. Phelan had told Miss Tracy, "No one but yourself will have recess to them oranges in the first goin'-off."

In due course the fruit was handed in at the back-door, together with some cane-sugar that was part of a more highly-priced store set aside by the farseeing Mr. Phelan. And because it was Delia's first day up after a mild though shattering attack of flu, she entered the sitting-room on a wave of tears and loudly declared her inability to deal with the stuff. "If I was to let meself think about them pips hoppin' about," she wailed, "look'd I'd perish." From recent experience the kind-hearted Miss Tracy knew what a first day up could be, and herself tackled the tedious process. As usual while slicing she began to sing to herself her favourite song.

"If it was annything else on earth," sobbed Delia again in the kitchen, "only that ould Kenjon Peel!" D. M. L.

"Pole Vault.—J. C. Percival-Clark (Trinity) jumped over Worcester, unrepresented. N. M. Boyts (B.N.C.) jumped over Magdalen, unrepresented."—*Sports News.*

So there are giants even in these days.



Proprietor of Village Fancy Shop. "WILLIAM, TAKE THE LADY TO THE BARGAIN-BASEMENT."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

The Youth of Gertrude Bell

The Letters of Gertrude Bell revealed a brilliant and fascinating personality. *The Earlier Letters of Gertrude Bell* (BENN, 15/-) reveal that personality in the making—the girl who, by WORDSWORTH'S genealogy, was mother of the woman. The first was written before she was eight, the last when she was twenty-four, and the whole series makes up an absorbing picture of a mind's development, for GERTRUDE BELL was a complex of qualities, most of which were early manifest. Independent and bold in speculation, sometimes almost violently impatient of animadversion, she yet meekly accepted those conventions of chaperonage and censorship which were imposed on the *jeune fille* of her day. Distinguished in scholarship both at school and at Oxford, where she got a first in history, she entered a ballroom with as much zest as she opened a book, and the academic was not the only gown in which she delighted to adorn herself. Affectionate, sympathetic and capable of high devotions, she was trenchant in criticism, knew a bore or a fool when she saw one and had the gift of satire. Her pen was vivid from the beginning, and the 'eighties and early 'nineties, in London and Oxford, Roumania and that Persia where lay her destiny, come back in freshest colours from the casual record of her days. The acquaintance of this ardent, lively and serious girl, to whom her half-sister, Lady RICHMOND, so gracefully introduces us, is an enrichment of our experience.

The Balance of Nature

When man once interferes with the very delicate scales of nature he invites disaster. Thus *Captain J. van Toch*, master of the *Kandong Bandoeng*, when he discovered the so-called devils of Devil's Bay, who were indeed then nothing more terrifying than a species of overgrown newt or salamander, should not have been led by their extraordinary talent for imitating human speech and their aptitude for the use of tools to furnish them with knives for defence against the sharks and for opening oyster-shells. Acting from the best motives, the worthy captain started the sequence of events which led, in the very capable hands of Mr. KAREL ČAPEK, to *War With the Newts* (ALLEN AND UNWIN, 7/6). For the trouble with these amiable and intelligent animals proved to be their remarkable fertility, and Mr. ČAPEK'S imagination runs riot as he describes, with almost a superabundance of documentary evidence, how from being trained and exploited by an international syndicate for pearl-fishing and other undersea work and supplied with weapons and explosives for that purpose, they come eventually to use these supplies to make more and more lagoons in which to live. For their great need is always more room. The early scenes of the book are the

more amusing, the later chapters positively terrifying—as when we hear the Chief Salamander, speaking hoarsely but persuasively over the wireless to the humans, announcing his intention of destroying another seaside province to provide more shallow water for his pullulating subjects, and finishing up with the announcement that a little light music will follow in a few minutes. It is a long while since I have read a more engrossing medley of comedy and biting satire.

Exile of Erin

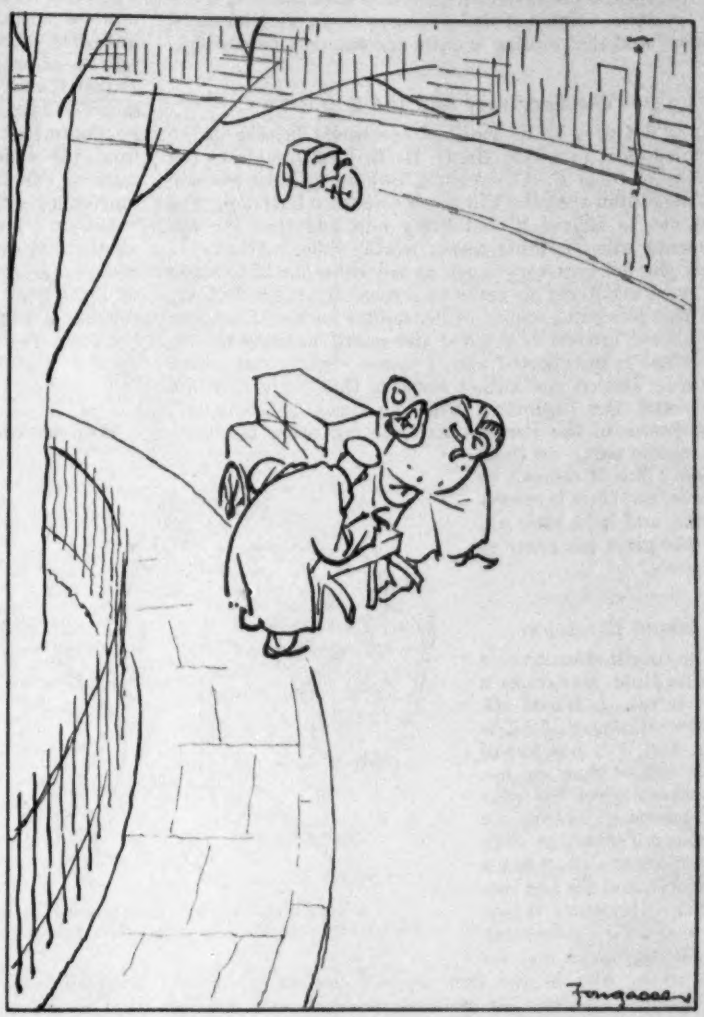
Green Memory, in what happy vogue
This book on Irish sport delivers
Into our hands its Tir-Nan-Ogue
Of quaking bogs and brawling rivers!
Here, far away from Shandon bells
The author—his the happy style—
Looks back and for our pleasure dwells
Once more in Erin's Isle.

Once more in that distressful land
Where some brown mountain of our love is
We here may see the setters stand
And set for us the infrequent coveys;
Once more, and still with Mr. DROUGHT
As our remembrancer, we may
Achieve—that antic—a sea-trout
Clean run from Bantry Bay.

This PHILIP ALLAN book 's the one
To take you back to voe and skerry—
To take you back, in rain and sun,
To Connemara and to Kerry,
To shores where all Atlantic heaves
Blue as the western afternoon,
To woods where still the 'cock, like thieves,
Steal in beneath the moon.

Such Grace Had Kings

Rhetorical, imaginative, skilfully planned and written with spirit, grace and power, the qualities which the Hon. RUARAIDH ERSKINE OF MARR lavishes on BOLINGBROKE'S *Idea of a Patriot King* admirably bear transference to a brilliant pamphlet of his own. *The Crown of England* (DENT, 6/-) starts with the virtual dictatorship of HENRY VII. and closes with "a piece of pure symbolism, a link of sorts, a mean to the end of Imperial Unity," the monarch who reigns but does not rule. It describes the sapping of the royal position that went on under the Tudors, the Stuart theory of Divine Right that actually exploded the mine, the inglorious motives that brought in Dutch WILLIAM and kept the Crown a Whig pocket-borough under the first two GEORGES, and the theory of BOLINGBROKE and DISRAELI that lent it a disastrous and an impressive effectiveness under GEORGE III. and VICTORIA. A postscript on democracy tends, I feel, to confuse the parasite bureaucracy with its potentially nobler host; but Mr. ERSKINE has taken too many wickets not to be pardoned one wide. "The king should still judge sitting in the sun!"



ORGANS AND STREET CRIES PROHIBITED

"THAT 'S NOT THE TUNE YOU CAN 'EAR, SERGEANT—'ONEST IT ISN'T—THAT'S JUST THE 'ANDLE SQUEAKING."

Auld Lang Syne

In the golden days of Scotland, still regarded with wistful regret by Mr. JAMES FERGUSSON and other sturdy patriots, Berwick was the greatest port on the western shores of the North Sea and good King *Alexander the Third* (MACLEHOSE, 5/-) could afford to pay his Forfar gardener five marks a year. This was after HAKON, King of Norway, and his ally, MAGNUS, King of the Isle of Man, had been finally defeated at the Battle of Largs, so that the Hebrides, though not the Orkneys or Shetlands, became part of Scotland. The peaceful achievements of the wise and blithesome Scottish king and the canny devices by which he contrived to enjoy the revenues of the earldom of Huntingdon as loyal subject of the English Crown while resisting the rising claims of HENRY III. and EDWARD I. to be suzerains of Scotland, together with all the stirring deeds of his bands of nobles, ALAN THE DOORWARD, WALTER THE STEWARD, ROBERT DE BRUS and the rest, are set forth in a little volume

wherein there is preserved a fragrance of old manuscripts and old loyalties. Many of the sentences begin with the word "Now," and the printing is quite uncommonly beautiful.

The Secretary and the Palmist

It is not easy to decide how one would behave in the circumstances in which Mr. C. H. B. KITCHIN places the heroine of *Olive E.* (CONSTABLE, 7/6). A palmist lets slip the suggestion that she will not see another birthday. She tries not to believe it, but every now and then she has moments when nothing seems worth while. Actually I think she behaves very much as any other healthy young girl with her living to make as a secretary might behave, and this pleasant account of her doings for eleven months has all the interest of a vivid and mildly exciting record. The close is unexpected and, I fancy, slightly out of the picture. Indeed one almost suspects that the end of the book and the beginning, with its quick epigrammatic descriptions of the *Parsons* circle, do not really belong to the middle part. In these people I find it difficult to believe, but *Olive* is always lifelike, and it is, after all, she who gives her name to the story.

Island Diversion

The entertainment value of Miss ROSE MACAULAY'S new novel, *I Would Be Private* (COLLINS, 7/6), is high, and if it has less of other values than she has sometimes given us that was, I suspect, intentional. She has not set out to write a tract for the times but a diversion, and she has succeeded. Her story is that of a young policeman, *Ronald McBrown*, and his wife, *Win*, who in the first chapter become possessed of "quins." Hating the ensuing publicity and having a shrewd suspicion that *Win's* sailor father is living happily there with a black lady, they and their family set forth for the Virgin Islands, accompanied by *Win's* brother and sister—but not her mother. In the latter half of the book they learn that tropic islands are no defence from curiosity, and decide to make a profit out of the fact. There are many clear-cut characters and brilliantly-painted scenes, and the *McBrowns* are darlings, and so is the *Vicar of Papagayo's* youngest daughter; but I do feel that Miss MACAULAY has not sufficiently realised the difficulties inherent in managing five babies at a time.

"The Pictures" from Birth

It is indeed *The Romance of the Movies* (HEINEMANN, 15/-) as Mr. LESLIE WOOD tells it. Perhaps he insists too much in his eager way on episodes that have a "news value"; undoubtedly his use of words is hasty; but the strangeness and fascination of his story are excuse enough. People not interested in films will, I suppose, avoid the book, but I don't think it could fail to interest anyone who was ever inside a cinema. At every stage of his gallop through the forty-five years covering the history of the film, Mr. WOOD tells an amusing story or reveals a peculiar fact. WILLIAM FRIESE-GREENE took his moving pictures, in the 'eighties, on strips of paper soaked in castor-oil. The first talkie—no, not in 1927 but in 1893—greeted EDISON on his return from the Chicago Exhibition with the words, "Good-morning, Mr. Edison. I hope you are satisfied with the kinetophonograph." D. W. GRIFFITH'S invention of the "close-up" roused Middle-West audiences to yell indignantly, "Show us their feet!" A sound-on-film talkie system almost identical with that now in use was perfected at Brixton in 1913. And so on. The book is a mine of curiosities, with thirty-seven photographs as interesting as the text. It could do, though, with an index.

A Continental Tour

Without claiming any intimate knowledge of the mentality of American millionaires, I find myself boggling when one of them, as in *Bulls Like Death* (NICHOLSON AND WATSON, 7/6), sends his beloved and only (legitimate) son to Europe on a series of bogus errands. Needless to say that young *Terence Herne*, constantly pursued by those who hoped to profit from his death, met with many amazing adventures, and it is vastly to Miss MARY FITT'S credit that they are credible. I will not try to give details of *Terence's* journeys from one country to another, or of the many attempts to put a final and fatal stop to them. But I can say that Miss FITT has kept complete command of a difficult team of characters, and that to accompany them is an inexpensive and pleasant way of spending a holiday on the Continent.



"I'M AFRAID ONE OF YOU WOULD HAVE TO STAND DOWN, WE COULDN'T DO WITH MORE THAN *ONE* FOREIGN SECRETARY."

Gusto

The publishers (GOLLANCZ) call *Maiden Possessed* (7/6) a "detective story," and it is true that the police are given lavish opportunities to exercise both their minds and bodies. But when Mr. JOHN NEWTON CHANCE let his red-bearded giant, *Mr. deHavilland*, loose in the New Forest he embarked upon a tale of riotous adventure that defies accurate description. *DeHavilland* is in fact an enormous figure of fun, who from lack of forethought went about seeking troubles and finding such a bumper crop of them that in the end he created an outsized riot. Logicians may argue that this rollicking child of nature could not have controlled an important and successful business, and I am not attempting to confute them; but Mr. CHANCE writes so well and zestfully that to insist upon minor defects in his account of *deHavilland's* cyclonic excursions would be, if not actually unjust, at any rate most ungrateful.

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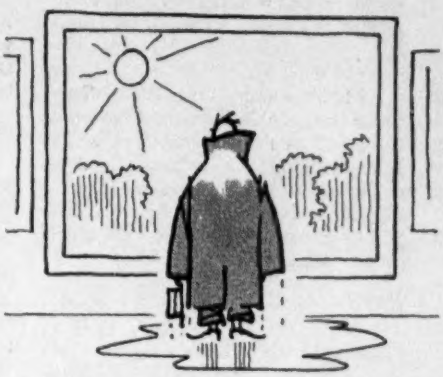
Charivaria

"CLIMATE has an effect on a nation's appreciation of the arts," we are credibly informed. One has only to recollect how the National Gallery fills up on a wet day.

* * *

"The most cheerful man I ever saw was a busy village cobbler," says a correspondent. And yet all the time his heart was probably in his boots.

* * *



An Essex naturalist has succeeded in breeding a tail-less mouse. This should come as a great relief to those who object to mice having tails.

* * *

Rumours of an impending coal shortage in Germany pave the way for a joke about HITLER not being able to fuel all the people all of the time.



* * *

"Discover England's Beauties Hiking," runs a headline. Our own personal experience is that beauties don't.

* * *

Signor MUSSOLINI, it is said, writes many letters daily in his own hand. But mostly, of course, he merely dictates.

* * *

"Our nudist colonies should be abolished," says a writer. A more sensible suggestion is that they should be handed over to Germany.

* * *

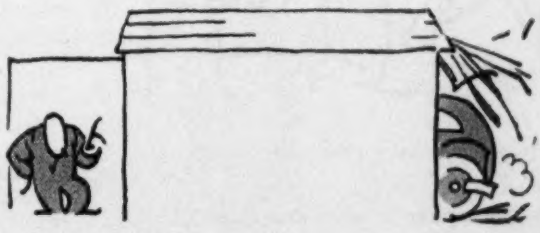
Fairy music is reported to have been heard in a wild region of North Wales. The B.B.C. will no doubt make arrangements to broadcast it.

* * *

A doctor says that everyone ought to try to get out on a fine sunny day. BRADMAN doesn't care.

* * *

A crooner declares that he is a teetotaler and a non-smoker. However, he croons.



It is stated that many disused cellars are now being made profitable by growing mushrooms in them. The alternative, of course, is to turn them into fashionable night-clubs.

* * *

A ferret which escaped from its cage at Blackburn killed a hundred-and-twenty-seven hens, chickens and ducks. And quite possibly one or two drakes Went West.

* * *

In America some prisons now produce their own newspaper. And of course their own registered readers as well.

* * *

Miniature octopuses, black in colour, about the size of a threepenny-bit and with seven feelers, have been discovered by an American naturalist in a muddy lagoon. The most popular theory is that they had escaped from a post-office ink-pot.



* * *

"When I dismissed my maid for impudence she threw castor-oil over the photograph of my husband," complains a housewife. Apparently she doesn't care very much for his portrait in oils.

* * *

A film-star boasts that over a dozen thoroughfares have been named after her. She claims to be several streets ahead of her nearest rival.

* * *

"Man is falling behind the machine," states an author. This is at least very much better than falling in front of it.

* * *

We are asked to suggest a name for a bulldog. Why not "Drummond"?

* * *

"My wife delights in backing horses in steeplechases," moans a reader. Well, it's probably less expensive than backing cars in garages.

Fundamental Thought on Defence

A Lot of Money

As one who finds a never-ending source of pleasure in studying the opinions of his fellow-men, I have been bitterly disappointed by the public's reception of the Government plan to spend £1,500,000,000 on defence over the next five years. After all, £1,500,000,000 (hereinafter referred to as "The Money" or "This Sum" for short) is quite a lot. We might reasonably have expected a certain amount of fun for our money in the way of Public Outeries, Cheers, Counter-Cheers and Popular Demonstrations. But in point of fact, what has happened? There has been no Public Outcry. There has been a marked lack of both cheers and counter-cheers. The political opposition has not been carried kicking and shouting from the House of Commons because it thinks we are going to spend too much; and as far as I know not a single admiral has had apoplexy because we are going to spend so little. As news—*real news*—the thing has been a flop.

Statisticians' Disappointing Display

Even the popular statisticians haven't been really up to form. A few people have tentatively pointed out that This Sum represents an expenditure of £700,000 every day for the next five years. Or, if they want to make it sound a little worse, £1,000,000 every *week*day for the next five years. But no one has yet told me the height of that number of one-pound-notes piled vertically, or how far they would stretch if laid end to end, or what the weight of the whole thing in half-crowns would be, or how many people could be given a pint of beer and a packet of Players for the same sum.

A Meagre Consolation

So far the only consolation offered us for the peculiar flatness of the whole thing is that my newspaper says that Foreign Opinion is Impressed. And, dash it all so it ought to be. Because if you convert That Amount into yen or pfenig or francs or what not it goes slap off the end of the paper.

Has Public Opinion Gone to Sleep?

I must confess therefore that at present the whole scheme seems to me Dear. You know—poor Value. After all, I've known plenty of measly little ten-million-pound affairs that have made a splendid show. And here we are about to spend All That, and the only thing that happens is solemn agreement from everybody that it's a Lot of Money. Just that. I think I could have stood all the other disappointments, however, if only people had written to the papers more. What on earth has happened to all the people with ideas? Are we becoming a blasé and unimaginative race? Nobody seems to have realised that nothing quite like this has happened before and that here is a superb opportunity to be really Fundamental and Original about the whole problem of Defence. The proposal that we shall spend five million pounds on, say, the Depressed Areas, will always produce scores of bright ideas for training unemployed miners as waiters or chub-fuddlers. But nobody seems to have thought about the problem of Defence at all, except in the old terms of battleships and tanks and more and more aeroplanes, all of which we are comfortingly told won't really prevent us from having a thoroughly nasty time in the next war, but will merely ensure that the Other Fellows will have a nasty time too.

Some Pertinent Suggestions

I feel therefore that the people who always know of a Better Way are neglecting their duty. For £1,500,000,000 you can buy almost anything. Surely if we people who have ideas put our heads together we could find something more really *protective* than a long-range bomber? Rather than let the thing go by default, I will throw out a few random suggestions myself. Be calm. I am not about to break into an Essay on Collective Security or Collective Insecurity. I feel the time has come to be more original than that. No. Rather I would suggest that since Collective Security does not seem very secure we should try as a change what the Army calls Proceeding Individually. There are about 47,000,000 people in this country. $£1{\cdot}5 \times 10^7$ works out at about £32 per head. Instead of spending several million pounds in a lump sum on a battleship which is vaguely intended to protect all of us, why not let us spend lots of little thirty-two-pound lumps on protecting the individual Bill Jones? It is all very well to talk about Society and the nation. But, after all, it is Bill Jones who gets bombed or gassed or what not.

Funk-Holes for All

Let us take a simple example. It is agreed that one of the greatest needs is defence from air attack. One of the safest places to be is underground—a *long* way underground—in something hermetically sealed. Now for thirty-two pounds a head it is surely possible to dig a sizable hole in the ground which would accommodate Rachel, myself, the infant Samuel and our domestic staff in comfort—nay, in luxury? Give me that and anybody who likes can come and waste time trying to bomb me, without doing any harm, and without the unpleasant and expensive necessity of anybody going and bombing him back.

Individual Security—or Advertisement?

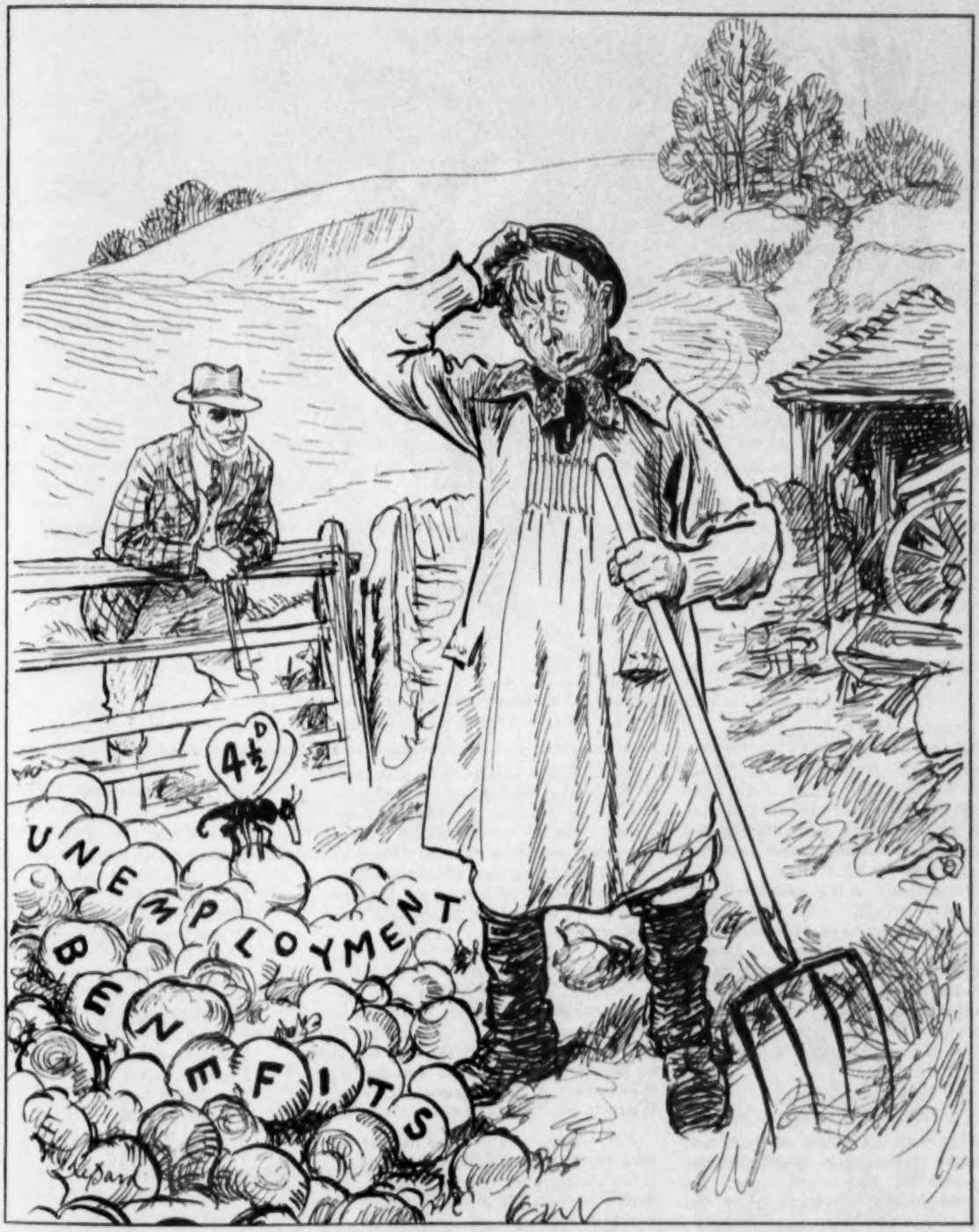
Again, if it is feared that the country might be invaded, why not simply spend the money on giving everyone a machine-gun and leave it at that? Let it be clearly understood that we



"I SHALL ALWAYS BE GRATEFUL TO SYLVIA FOR HELPING ME TO GET OVER THAT AFFAIR WITH ANNE."

"WHICH ANNE?"

"THE ONE WHO HELPED ME TO GET OVER THAT AFFAIR WITH JANE."



THE LOAMSHIRE LAD

"HOW BE I GETTING ON WITH MR. ELLIOT'S TURMUTS, MR. MORRISON? MAIN WELL, THANKEE, IF IT WEREN'T FOR THAT THEER PESKY VLY."

[The Statutory Committee has just presented its first report on the Agricultural Account of the Unemployment Fund.]



"Can I kiss ee again, Mary?"
"Again, Jarge? Ee bain't kissed oi once yet."
"Oo, Mary! Why, oi kissed ee Michaelmas."

should make no effort to stop anyone from coming, but that there were 47,000,000 of us, we all had machine-guns, and we didn't care for strangers. I'd like to see your military tactician invade *that*. Think it over.

Alternatively, if the individual idea does not appeal, why not follow modern commercial practice and spend the money on advertising? I cannot conceive of *anything* which could not be put across by £1,500,000,000 worth of advertising. By Press, radio and direct mail let us impress upon the rest of the world, day in, day out, that Englishmen are

(*a*) Very peace-loving;
(*b*) Devils when they're roused;

together with little strip cartoons and personal testimonials showing what happened to people who were incautious enough to attack us in the past.

The Empire Route to Bankruptcy

The difficulty, I suppose, is that we have to think not only of England but of the Empire. This usually *is* the difficulty.

But I cannot help pointing out that if the Empire is going to cost the above-mentioned amount in upkeep, so to speak, it seems very doubtful if anybody else would be able to afford to take it away from us. If we go on like this we shall give having an Empire such a bad name that we shouldn't be able to give it away.

It's Up to You!

Anyhow, I don't profess that the above are *finished* ideas. All I want is to get people *thinking*. The position is that A has £1,500,000,000 and wants to preserve both his life and goods. What does A do? Come on, boys. Write to Sir Thomas Inskip about it.

P.S.—I have found the answer to that thirty-two pounds a head idea. It isn't holes in the ground or machine-guns. It is in Mr. Cook's catalogue. For thirty-two pounds one can go to Africa—and come back. I suggest that the surest possible means of defence would be for all of us to take tickets to Somewhere Really Remote and throw away the return-halves. If it's too difficult to defend the Empire, why not let the Empire defend us?

My Snooker

I'm not that *rara avis*
A second Joseph Davis;
I'm not a fluent cueman
Like genial Tom Newman;
The tale that I beat Smith
Is just another myth.
I lack the knack
To pot the black,
I cannot sink
The ruddy pink,
I never do
Insert the blue,
I cannot down
The dusky brown,
I'm never seen
To take the green,
The other fellow
Takes the yellow;
I go instead
In off each red
At which I aim.
Confound this game!

"Team of Cheetahs Imported."
Daily Paper.

The blightahs should learn to play the game.

The Film Last Night

"In the fifty-never-mind years of my life," said Aunt Miriam, "I have never seen a firearm in the metal, as it were. Yet whenever I go to the pictures I am shown whole arsenals as normal accessories to the life of the people. Why, I wonder?"

"People," I suggested, "like to see things they've never seen in real life."

"Nonsense. Otherwise there'd be more bad travel films. I was thinking of the picture I saw last night."

"Ah, yes."

"It was all about an American journalist who needed a story to fill the front-page. Though I'm sure I don't see why they can't fill it respectably, like *The Times*. It would save so much celluloid."

"And he ran into a racket?"

"Is that the word? I couldn't quite catch it. Incidentally it occurred to me that the peculiar quality of American prose may have something to do with their odd custom of typing in shirt-sleeves and trilby hats. Anyway, he met two tennis-players."

"Tennis-players?"

"Racketeers, they said. Aren't they tennis-players? Crooks, are they? I thought they didn't look very athletic."

"What happened then?"

"There was a murder. A girl had shot a man. At least, that was perfectly obvious to everyone except the journalist. I think he was probably attracted by her."

"Was she arrested?"

"No, he helped her to get away. Then another man was shot."

"What had that to do with the story?"

"I believe they put it in for atmosphere. It happened quite suddenly, just as he was walking out of a telephone-box. A *dreadful* end and quite unnecessary."

"What happened to the journalist?"

"He went and got drunk. Then somebody tried to shoot him too, but he was walking so unsteadily that they all missed. But he was soon quite sober because he had to write a story about a murder."

"Another one?"

"I gathered so. The same girl was there again, holding the revolver. She said she'd just picked it up and he believed her, but it sounded rather thin to me."

"And then?"

"He got drunk again and the story became more confusing. There was a motor accident and somebody shot at the journalist and missed. I couldn't understand why they shot so well at everybody else and so badly at him."

"What was the girl doing?"

"She'd answered a telephone-call and gone to a lonely house in the country. A very foolish thing to do. The two tennis-players were there as well."

"What did they do to her?"

"Nothing at all; but the journalist came later on. Very impolite of him, because he hadn't been invited. Then everybody started shooting at each other."

"Was anyone hurt?"

"Oh, yes; the two tennis-players were both killed. It seemed unjust, because I hadn't noticed them doing anything wrong. But the police arrived and seemed quite satisfied, so I suppose it was all right."

"And that left the journalist and the girl?"

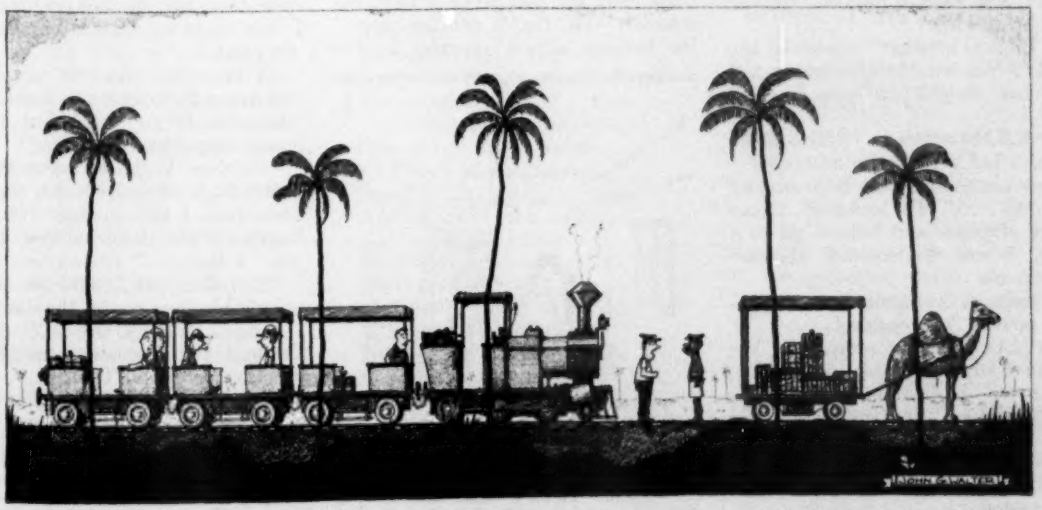
"That's right," said Aunt Miriam. "But it was a very disappointing ending."

"Why?"

"They ought to have shot each other—only they didn't."

"Things To Come."

The Foreign Secretary announces the conclusion of a new "Gentleman's Agreement" by which the Powers concerned agree to move their warships a little further up the Mediterranean as Great Britain wishes to get two more in.



"Can't you brisk up that old camel a bit? This is the 'Wonga-Wonga Flyer.'"

Medical

"Mr. Parrot, Sir. Applicant for a commission," said the C.S.M., ushering me through the doorway.

The M.O. bent a somewhat mournful gaze on me. "Come in," he said. "And get your clothes off; you can keep your trousers on."

He continued to eye me dejectedly as I stripped.

"I suppose," he asked, with a glimmer of hope in his eyes, "you don't happen to suffer from running discharge at the ears? No? Or did either of your parents have epileptic fits?"

"I'm afraid not," I replied regretfully. It seemed a shame to disappoint him.

Gloom redescended on him. "I thought so. Nothing interesting ever turns up here. You'd better take his height."

He watched while I stepped on to the weighing-machine and the C.S.M. slid the arm of the height-standard down until it rested on the top of my head.

"Five-foot-nine-and-a-narf, Sir," he reported.

The M.O. tutted. "Sixty-nine-and-a-half. I've told you before, heights must be in inches and weights in pounds. What does he weigh?"

The C.S.M. fiddled about with the weights and then cleared his throat. "Nine stone eleven pun," he announced.

The M.O. clasped his hand to his brow and cast his eyes heavenwards. "I ask for bread and he gives me a stone!" he moaned. "Oh, unregenerate age!"

The C.S.M. seemed puzzled. "Bread, Sir?" he queried.

"A Biblical allusion," explained the doctor. "You wouldn't understand. I want his weight in pounds, not stones."

The C.S.M. reflected. "Nine stone eleven. Let's see," he muttered—"sixteen ounces one pun, fourteen pun one stone . . ." He broke off, seized a piece of paper and bore it off to a corner, where he started abstruse calculations.

"*I* make it a hundred-and-thirty-seven pounds," I ventured.

The M.O. eyed me sternly. "We can't have you giving your own weight, you know," he admonished. "It's most irregular. *Most* irregular." He tutted heavily to himself, again shook his head reprovingly, and busied himself in his turn with a piece of paper and a pencil.

"A hunderd-and-thirty-seven pun," announced the C.S.M. at last. "Is that what you make it, Sir?"

"A hundred-and-thirty-seven pun—pounds—it is," confirmed the M.O., furtively screwing up his sheet, adorned by now with a sketch depicting seagulls in flight over a black cat (back to artist) sitting on a wall.

He filled in the weight on my form and watched with some impatience the C.S.M. as he measured my chest. "Not that way, man!" he said testily, getting up out of his chair. "Here, let me do it."

He did it, and studied the result. "Twenty-four inches!" he said in some surprise, almost forgetting to be dejected.

"You're reading from the wrong end of the tape, Sir," the C.S.M. pointed out.

"It's worry, that's what it is," remarked the M.O. gloomily as he tried again. "Can't seem to think what I'm doing. Look at that now! Fifty-two inches!"

"Beg pardon, Sir," interrupted the C.S.M., "but you've got the tape round the height standard as well."

"Hell!" said the doctor, readjusting it. "Of course I'm getting old as well. That and the continual worry. I'm losing my grip, that's what. Time was—thirty-six inches—now breathe out—when I thought no more of examining a hundred—*right* out, now."

"It *is* right out," I protested in somewhat muffled tones.

"Thirty-three inches. What about your eyes? Can you read that bottom line with both eyes?"

I could—and did.

"Well, you're all right so far," he admitted grudgingly. "But of course that's how it is with a lot of people. Outwardly the picture of health, but inwardly—ah, that's another story." He became almost cheerful at the thought of what might be wrong inside me. He whacked my ribs and thumped me over the kidneys. Then, placing two fingers of one hand on my chest, he tapped them with the forefinger of the other.

"Who's there?" I asked obediently.

"Chandler," said the M.O.

"Chandler who?" I asked.

"Chandler," said the M.O., giving me an unpleasant look, "is the Sergeant-Major's name. If ever I want to play 'Mothers and Fathers' or 'Pop Goes the Weasel' I'll let you know. At the moment I am conducting a medical examination. Chandler, where's my stethoscope?"

It was ten minutes before we found it, hanging round his own neck.

He anchored the ends in his ears and listened intently to my chest. I stopped breathing and listened too; after all, it was *my* chest.

"Golly!" said the M.O., hastily pulling the ends out of his ears. "What was that?"

"A hiccup," I explained. "I was holding my breath."

"Just you go on breathing," he said severely. "I never heard of such nonsense. What do you think I'm listening for?"

I continued to breathe and all his former despondency reappeared in his expression. "I thought so," he said gloomily, uncorking his ears again. "Nothing wrong there. More cannon-fodder for you, Chandler. Where do I sign?"

"So now *you're* tied up," he remarked after the C.S.M. had left, bearing my completed papers with him. "Well, I suppose I was like you once—keen and all that sort of thing. I used to spend every moment I could spare from my practice up here. Now I only come up when I have to; and why, eh?"

As my vest was over my head I was not in the position to make helpful comments of any kind, but I made noises suggestive of inquiry.

"Because I *always* have to wait, that's why. Any time it's the same. Last week I had to wait two hours. I spoke to the Colonel about it, mind you. I said——"

"It's free now," said the C.S.M., poking his head round the door.

With a whoop the M.O. dashed through the doorway, hanging his stethoscope round the C.S.M.'s neck as he went past, and pounded off along the corridor.

"I'm sorry you found 'im in such a temper, Sir," said the C.S.M., "but 'e's always like that when 'e's kept waiting."

"Waiting for what?"



"FUNNILY ENOUGH, SIR, YOU'RE THE FIRST PERSON THAT'S ASKED ABOUT THE ACOUSTICS."



"YES, IT'S A DELIGHTFULLY EASY INSTRUMENT TO BLAY—THE ONLY CRAB TO IT IS—WUD IS IN A GONSTANT DRAUGHT."

"What, didn't he say? 'E usually complains to everyone. For the ping-pong table. They say it's all 'e joined the Territorials for. Mad on it, 'e is."

"And was that the only reason he was so gloomy?"

"Corse it was. If you go in there now you'll find 'im 'appy as a sand-boy, all on account of being able to bang a bit of a ball of cellyloid."

It seemed my duty to make some sort of excuse for him. "After all," I pointed out, "they must have *some* relaxation, especially at this time of the year. They work very hard, these medical men."

"*Medical* men." The C.S.M. sniffed. "*Medical!*" he repeated with deep feeling. "'Im and 'is bread! *I* calls 'im blooming well *mental*."

For the benefit of those Regulars who are inclined to doubt the capability of the Territorial Army I should add that "blooming" was *not* the word he used.

"This 200-years-old public-house is beginning to bend under the weight of its years. The ceiling over the bar is six inches lower.

The new building will be half-timbered and thatched, and will have a better water supply."—*Evening Paper.*

That isn't quite the point.

Quick March!

The March wind wakes in Heron wood
And slowly crawls
Up from the cress-pond
Where the bull-frog calls,
Ting-tong, ting-tong,
An unimportant song;
And every dangling hair of straw
And moulting feather,
And every loose-joined thing
That is not safely bound
Or rooted to the ground,
And broken sticks,
And buds too soon unfurled,
And slates and bricks
Heedlessly put together—
All these take heart
And with a joyful "Cr-e-eak!"
Make ready to depart,
Hoping they will be hurled
For many a wind-blown mile.
"Quick, March! Quick, March!"
they shriek.
The wind takes up the cry,
Ridding a sleepy eye
Of catkin dust.
And so begins this week
A month of treachery
When errant chimneys shake with wanderlust,
When hats show gipsy blood
And even gate-posts must
Be freed a little while
To see the world. O. D.

Bridge at the Dorchester

Mr. Punch hopes to see many of his friends at the Bridge Party in aid of the Surgical Supply Depôt which is to be held at the Dorchester Hotel on Tuesday, March 9th. Among the attractive prizes are a six weeks' cruise up the Amazon and (for the less ambitious) a return flight to Paris. Tables (£2 2*s.*) or single tickets (10/6) can be obtained from the Hon. Secretary, 1 Phillimore Gardens, W.8.

Things Which Could Not Have Been Better Expressed.

"She had pleaded 'Guilty' to a charge of breaking the window to ventilate a grievance."—*Sunday Paper.*

"TEN FOWLS IN A SNACK."
Headline in Birmingham Paper.

For Gargantua?

At the Pictures

Pointed Beards

Having read the romance, *Fire Over England*, and excitingly followed the adventures of the young hero, at Eton when he was singled out for notice by *Queen Elizabeth*; and, later, when in Devonshire he fell under the spell of the bewitching *Cynthia* and met this plotter and that; and so on through those dangerous days—having indentified myself so closely with him, I felt it a shock when I went to the film with the same title, based on Mr. Mason's novel, not for a long while to find anything recognisable at all. This shows with what different minds novelists and film-producers work, for whereas Mr. Mason had concentrated on *Michael's* spiritual development, Mr. Pommer saw only the antagonism of Spain and Roman Catholicism, culminating in the attack and defeat of the Armada. Thus, although there are a few kisses and one joke (that in England it always rains), the picture is concerned with Queen Elizabeth, Leicester and Burleigh, defensive, and Philip of Spain and his grandees, defiant; while in the Escurial the now wholly superficial young man is performing incredible feats as a spy, in the disguise of an English traitor whom the Spanish would have very well known he was merely impersonating.

Having escaped, packed with knowledge as to the size of the Armada and the date of sailing, *Michael* informs the *Queen* on her white horse at Tilbury, and after she has borrowed *Leicester's* sword and knighted him, she puts him in charge of the British Navy and gives him a private tip of her own about the fire-ships. The rest is easy. After a terrific scene of conflagrations at sea, the joy-bells begin to ring and the *Queen* and an assortment of her people kneel and render thanks to God. The fire over England has been extinguished.

To most audiences the absence of *Drake* will be a problem; but let them not be too much perplexed, for *Sir Michael* is with us.

What we have to decide is not so much whether history should be thus adapted, as whether the screen story is interesting. To a certain extent I think it is. The *Queen Elizabeth* of Flora Robson is human and pathetic, and her petulances seem to be very real. She may not look quite as Zucchero painted her, but her fine mobile features compel attention, and in her black costume at the end she is magnificent. The venerable *Burleigh* of Morton Selten has a genuine persuasiveness too, and I thought Raymond Massey's *Philip of Spain* every inch a king. But there has been much confusion about *Michael*, and to let him be a lover in Spain as well as in England—or, at any rate, to be a very good imitation of one—was a mistake.



HEAD-DRESS

Queen Elizabeth . . . Flora Robson
Burleigh . . . . . Morton Selten

His fluent ease both as a Spaniard and as an Englishman tried us a little high too.

The question that I now find tormenting me is: What effect on the male physiognomy will this film have? Shall we again sport the pointed beard?



FLAT AND SHARP

George . . . . . George Formby
Max. . . . . Gus McNaughton

For every man, except *Burleigh*, in *Fire Over England* has a pointed beard; and they are all comely; and we are a vain and imitative lot. There are a few chins among us already garnished in the Elizabethan and Spanish manner: will there be more of them? Will this Masonic adornment increase?

The idea of hiding a fortune in the seat of a chair is not new. I seem to connect it with the domestic pedestrian muse of Eliza Cook, who ordinarily would never suggest a film farce; but in *Keep Your Seats, Please* the authors have gone to a Russian story, called, in English, *Diamonds to Sit On*, and have turned that into even wilder farce, calling to their assistance such perverters of the ordinary rules of life as Harry Tate (without moustache); and George Formby the second, who for his father's Lancastrian lugubriousness has substituted a cheerful idiocy; and Alastair Sim, who looks like an exceedingly eminent broadcaster and rejoices me, no matter what part he distorts. That an irascible old lady's huge fortune should be concealed in a chair is sure fire, particularly when we see her depositing bonds and jewels there and afterwards sewing them up. Not only are we thus prepared for fun, but the rigours of death become a jest.

Thereafter the plot is simple. In the seat of one of seven chairs, all exactly alike, is a fortune, the secret of which is known only to George Formby, to Florence Desmond, to Alastair Sim and to Gus McNaughton, who learned it as an eavesdropper; and their efforts to get possession of this piece of furniture follow. They begin with the auction of the old lady's effects, conducted, or misconducted, by Harry Tate; they are continued in whatever new homes the chairs have found, whither George Formby and his accomplice must go too, for the good motive, and Alastair Sim for the bad; and where, to make sure, the upholstery should be ripped. It is this ripping which produces most of the fun. But is the fun ripping? Very doubtful.

E. V. L.

Frankness is All

"Why Not Own a House that is Built to Last?
(Twelve Months' Guarantee.)"
Building Estate Advt.

"The newts idea for a handkerchief is a short phrase like 'How are you?' printed emphatically all over it."—*American Paper.*

We prefer some phrase of more definite application, such as "No newts is good newts."

Shapes

"I WANT to be absolutely quiet for the next half-hour," I said to Edith, "because I have to write the minutes of the last meeting of the Coronation Celebration Committee. It is not going to be an easy task, because I jotted down my notes in the back of Vol. III. of BOSWELL'S *Life of Johnson*, and now I have foolishly lent the book to Colonel Hogg, who has taken it with him to Bath."

"Bath!" said Edith excitedly. "Do you remember at breakfast this morning I said I knew there was something I wanted to ask you about and couldn't remember what it was? It was whether we couldn't have a debate at the Literary Society some time on why things are the shape they are—like tea-pots being short and fat and coffee-pots being tall and thin."

I put my hand to my head and groaned. "I need every scrap of brain I can muster to write these minutes," I said. "And I can't see the connection between Bath and tall thin coffee-pots anyway."

"There isn't any connection," said Edith, "but the debate would be about the shape of things generally; and as I was lying in my bath this morning I suddenly wondered why baths were always made the shape they are. I calculated that in England alone there must be at least ten million baths exactly the same shape, except that millionaires have them a foot or so longer and the submerged tenth have them so short that they can't submerge their knees unless they get in upside-down. It seems to me that if somebody would invent a bath of an entirely different shape he would make a fortune."

I put down my pencil and gave it up.

"What other shape could you make a bath?" I asked.

Edith pondered. "You could have a bath the shape of a jug," she said—"a sort of standing-up bath like the one in *Sylvie and Bruno*. It would be much easier to get properly submerged in a bath that shape, and it wouldn't take up so much room, and there wouldn't be so much water splashed on the floor. The water would also keep hot longer."

"But how would you get in and out?" I objected.

"You could either have a ladder," said Edith, "or else a water-tight door in the side. If you had a water-tight door in the side you would enter the bath while it was empty and feel the water gradually rising round you; and then when you had finished you would wait till the water had gone before emerging. But perhaps a ladder would save time."

"I think the idea is thoroughly rotten," I said. "Because if you dropped the soap you would probably be drowned while you were trying to rescue it. *Please* may I get on with my work?"

"Another thing we could include in the debate," said Edith, "is billiard-tables. All the billiard-tables I have ever seen have been sort of oblong. Why doesn't somebody invent a *round* billiard-table?"

"With square balls, I suppose?" I said caustically.

"You *could* have square balls with little wheels on them," said Edith, "but round tables would certainly be a *real* change. If nobody else would buy them, there would be an enormous sale to lighthouse-keepers."



"WE DON'T STOCK COAL-*SCUTTLES*, MADAM, BUT WE HAVE A LARGE ASSORTMENT OF COAL-HELMETS, CABINETS, BOXES OR BUNKERS."

There was a fierce Colonel of Worcester
Who was roused before dawn by a
rorcester;
He uttered one word
Which demolished the bird
And slept on to the hour he was
yorcester.

"Residents are asked not to place paper in their dust-bins. A reminder will be made with the demand note."—*Local Paper.*

Nothing is said as to what we are to do with the demand note.

Eye-Trouble

Among the Mysteries of Science I have always placed very high the care of the human eye. When a doctor tells me about my liver or my lungs I have generally come to the same conclusion myself, so there is little cause for awe and admiration. But these eye-fellows are wizards and I goggle at them all.

The opticians included. You take your spectacles to a strange one, who has never seen you. He puts a little instrument like a map-measurer on your spectacles and at once he knows all about your eyes and you, whether you are astigmatic or alcoholic, which is your shooting eye, how much you smoke, what are your politics, and all the rest. How is this done?

And how does the spectacle-manufacturer work? He receives from the optician (who has received it from the oculist) a prescription which looks like an algebraical problem in rather bad taste—full of fractions, *minuses* and *pluses*, and heathen symbols and little bits of things that look like logarithms. There is one formula for the left eye (reading) and another for the right; and two more formulæ for the long-distance glasses. And all these are quite different from the formulæ for the man next-door. What, I repeat, does the spectacle-manufacturer do? Does he go off and make four new round bits of glass especially to suit my requirements? To make a bit of glass that magnifies at all is sufficiently remarkable; but to make, to order, a bit that magnifies precisely to the *n*th degree, no more and no less, is surely witchcraft. Or does he vaguely make large sheets of magnifying-glass of all degrees and trust to luck that one day the oculist will order a suitable slice from one of them for me? I cannot tell.

And then there is the oculist. The things he does! The way he looks *behind* your eyes (or so he says) to see that all is in order there! The way—— However, I was going to tell you about the rather disturbing time I had with a new oculist I visited the other day. Mr. ——, at first, seemed a normal ornament of Harley Street—confident, distinguished, charming. And at first all went normally. He placed the usual series of lenses before the eyes and inquired which lines on the board looked blurred and clear and white-edged and so on. And, as usual, I gradually grew more and more muddled. That always seems to please them, and we passed on to the letters.

For those who have never had trouble with the oculist I should explain that he has a series of letters in different sizes displayed in a bright light on the opposite wall, and one is asked to read them aloud—thus:—

K
MSGDO
TVNUESLP
DKOVMFGALT
SUWHIRLXYE
WTMOPNKL
BQJIAMKLFET

I always find that I want to show off as I read: I read as quickly as possible in a rather arrogant tone. The last two baffle me as a rule; but when I come to the second line from the bottom I feel conceitedly that few other patients could have got so far.

And generally the man says "Good," confirming my opinion. But this one frowned and said, "Try again, please." He pressed a button and another lot of letters appeared.

I read with some surprise—

H
ELLSAIDT
HEDUCHESSTHEN
ATIONALIZATIONOFTHEM
EANSOFPRODUCTIONDISTRIB
UTIONANDEXCHANGEISTHEONL
YSOLUTIONWHEREISMYBLASTEDCAR

This time I reached, with a little difficulty, the very end. "Good," he said. "Now this." I glanced at him doubtfully. The face was set; he did not seem to be a jester. Perhaps he was a "propagandist." I had heard of the Left Book Club. Was this the Left Eye Doctor?

But no. I read—

W
HEREV
ERANENGLISH
MANMAYROAMH
EWILLSEENOTHINGTO
INDUCEINHIMADESIRETOC
HANGEHISCOUNTRYORHISCONSTITUTION

This time I reached the end with scarcely a falter. The old eyes seemed much better. He tried again—

Y
OUMAYS
AYWHATYOULIK
EABOUTTHEPLEASUR
ESOFARTANDTHEJOYOFPU
BLICSERVICEBUTAFTERALLISTH
EREANYTHINGLIKEANICEFRIEDS
OLEANDAJOLLYGOODBOTTLEOFWINEWITH

ABLOND
E

This time I raced through the lot and did the smallest line with no trouble at all.

"Marvellous!" I said. "Those are the glasses for me." Generally at the end of these examinations one is tired and confused and far from certain whether one can see better through the new lenses or not. To-day I had no doubt.

"One more trial," said he; and he handed me a card on which were printed two or three passages in tiny type. As a rule these cards contain the most frightful pieces from John Stuart Mill or books about botany. This was different.

"There was a young man who said why did that gentleman spit in my eye I would very much rather he spat at my father but I should not advise him to try."



"Fish biting well?"



THE BRITISH CHARACTER

FONDNESS FOR TRAVEL

"If you want a really good blow-out go to Beal's in Troup Street; the beer is excellent, the oysters impeccable, you can have what you want off the grill, and if you mention my name Annie (the dark one) will wait upon you whizzingly."

"Ill fares the land to hastening ills a prey where wealth accumulates and men decay but how much more unfortunate are those whose wealth declines and population grows."

"I like that," murmured the healer, as I came triumphantly to the end—"BELLOC, I believe."

"What's the idea?" said I.

Before replying he scribbled one of those mystic prescriptions, and then he said: "It's the new Psychology of Sight. Eye-trouble and eye-strain are everywhere to-day. Never were there so many spectacle-wearers, never were my profession so busy. This, in my belief, is partly because the modern eye is increasingly confronted with uncongenial or repellent objects. The Ancient Greeks did very well without glasses because they seldom looked upon anything that was not pleasing. Your own eyes, just now, resented a dreary succession of letters, picked haphazard from the alphabet; and they shied—but not so much—at a dubious political doctrine, though attractively presented; but with the same lenses they eagerly and easily apprehended a patriotic sentiment and a glowing pen-picture of good food and wine. Accordingly I adjust my tests to the various types of patient who visit me. I have Tory texts and Socialist, noble apophthegms and naughty verses, bits of SHAKESPEARE and ROSE MACAULAY and *Who's Who* and *Ruff's Guide*. And when I get the right reading matter I know that I shall get the glasses right."

"Wizard," said I.

"But that is not all. If you don't want to come to me again (and I must warn you that my fee is exceptional) you must pursue the same principle in your daily life. *Rest* the eyes—rest them, that is, from uncongenial work. To look at something displeasing imposes twice the strain upon the eyes—though we may not consciously feel it. Therefore avoid leading articles with which you do not agree; close the eyes during a dull or a hostile speech, or in the presence of an exceptionally ugly man or over-painted lady. Turn your head as you pass a hideous villa or vulgar advertisement. We talk of 'stopping our ears,' and sometimes, in the presence of an intolerable noise, we do it; but we never think of stopping our eyes.

"And of course you should as much as possible use the eyes on that which pleases you. Tastes vary, and so do eyes; but in your case I judge that, whenever possible, you should gaze on beautiful young women and delicious wine, with occasional glances at fine poetry and sausage-and-mash. All this may add ten years to your sight. Especially perhaps the beautiful young women. The modern phrase, 'Easy to look at,' is more than slang—it contains a scientific truth. Good-morning," he said; "my fee is five guineas."

"Here you are," said I, closing my eyes.

A. P. H.

Keep Moving, Please

I SEE from correspondence in what other newspapers would call "a Sunday paper"—and we've no need to be nasty about that: they would be quite right—that some people want films of the Coronation ceremonies and processions to be stopped every now and then so that the audience can inspect some pulsating scene at leisure and get a grasp of the details, and not go round afterwards, like any poor fool who saw the real thing, saying there was something or other that they didn't notice.

At least I think a check in the film is what the people want. One correspondent advocates "holding" a scene for a few seconds, but I fancy he means stopping it, for a still picture. There isn't much that is static about any of the Coronation functions, that I can see: holding any scene for a few extra seconds would simply mean having it change—a horse would jerk off the screen and be succeeded by a couple of policemen, or someone would ritually trip over a mace and then along would come someone else and ritually trip over it. No, I think stopping all action is what these correspondents have in mind; they want the same effect as that produced by the man who bellows into an empty goldfish-bowl, or whatever it is, to silence the roar of London's traffic at the beginning of "In Town To-night." (And, by the way, do you understand why they have to silence the roar of London's traffic, not to mention the roar of the old lady selling violets, just to give us "In Town To-night"? Always seems a thorough-going *non-sequitur* to me.)

Well, I disapprove of the whole idea. To begin with it is one more example of that favouritism, that exaggerated consideration for the people who aren't there, which is stalking grimly—hand-in-hand, I shouldn't wonder—about this country to-day. Why should the people seeing the show for sixpence in a news-reel theatre at any time of the day they like be thought so much more of than those getting up at dawn to see it for six guineas from a hard wooden seat? No Drum-Major's horse prancing along St. James's Street is going to remain suddenly immobile while the party at a fifty-guinea upper-window counts the stitches on his saddle-cloth; but the people who pay a few pence an hour or two later are to have all kinds of fun. Is this fair?

Nominally a piece of kindness to the people who (the correct pronoun, I believe, is "that," but every time I use it my nose itches)—the people who see it all on the screen, this device would really be nothing less than a smack in the eye for those who trouble to see it on the hoof. And before long these latter will begin to murmur discontentedly. They get too many such smacks in the eye. We shall soon find people paying guineas for the privilege of staying away from a show and only pence if they have to be actually present at it. This suggestion of stopping films, if carried out or adhered to or whatever you do to suggestions (I and a select little circle holding similar views always adhere to them; we get scraped off once a week), would be a step along the road to what I may call Reversal of Charges. With the disadvantages of adhering to a step along the road I don't propose to deal here.

My other objections to the idea are based on the effect, in a cinema, of stopping the film.

Any assiduous movie-goer knows that checking a film suddenly in mid-career, whether it shows a galloping horse, or a swallow-diver, or a train, or a man eating oysters, is one of the sure-fire ways of getting a laugh. Now is laughter the reaction these correspondents wish to provoke? Perhaps they're fanatical republicans, and it is; but I imagine they've simply forgotten what people laugh at. In this they differ from the men who regularly photograph for the screen British my-wife's-in-your-bedroom, you-mustn't-be-found-here stage farces, and it was about time somebody differed.

Finally let us imagine the scene in a cinema when the film becomes still for the earnest audience to examine the details. Now even if they don't laugh they are going to pass remarks; I know this in my bones. People comment a good deal even when the picture is moving, and they refrain from commenting more only because something else will be happening by the time they get the words out. When the picture is still and nothing on it can get away for some moments, believe me, there are going to be people who (I know I should say "that") give tongue.

In this cinema where we are imagining the scene—and I personally am imagining myself in the eight-and-sixpenny seats after a perfect dinner, and to-morrow's Sunday—a Mr. S. T. Gidney or Whidney down in front is explaining to his sister-in-law that the Mayor of Casterbridge, shown in the bottom right-hand corner of the screen (and immobilised wearing an expression of the utmost terror) is holding his trident in the wrong hand. A Mrs. H. J. Stoopid in the row behind disagrees; she says her brother Neptune has been a Mayor for ten years and he always holds his trident like that. Mr. Whidney turns round and a courteous argument begins. Meanwhile the commentator—I take it the commentator will keep on, though the picture may be still—is booming something about the plumes in the helmets of the infantry to be seen in the background; several people say "Sssh!" and a Mr. Robinson begins to clap in an irritated fashion. Little cells of disturbance like this are fermenting all over the theatre, and the longer the "still" the bigger the disturbance. It is going to be



"I SUPPOSE THEY MUST HAVE BEEN ENGAGED."



"SORRY TO COME ON YOUR FAIRWAY."
"THAT'S ALL RIGHT; I'M NOT USING IT MUCH."

as hard to get out of this cinema as it was to get away from the stands after the real thing.

There you have the situation in a bombshell. I admit that my last reason cancels out my first, in a way; but I don't let that bother me, and why should you worry?

R. M.

The S.P.S.

SPRING-CLEANING what is usually called the "Nursery—schoolroom, I mean"—always yields some surprises. Formerly it was the unearthing of caches full of an incredible number of dry crusts and other unpopular fare, but of late years the finds have been more interesting and less revolting.

This year's surprise was a box, blocking up a wall-ventilator and containing a long-lost missionary-box and a notebook. The missionary-box was empty, of course, but the contents of the book were as follows. I am glad to say the chaste dashes are original.:—

THE S.P.S. (SOCIETY FOR PREVENTING SWEARING)

RULE 1.—This shall be a Secret Society, the full name of it shall never be revulged to anybody on pain of Death.

RULE 2.—Reasons for the S.P.S. We have come to the colusion that the bad habit of Swearing is wrong, not because all teachers parents and cetera say it is, but because we find from expereince that only comon people do it much, such as Cads, except in extreem provoction. Therefore we do not want to get into the habit of a comon habit.

RULE 3.—We are going to pay a fine in the following order for each swear we utter, as follows:—

Blow ¼*d*. Dash ¼*d*. Swear ½*d*. Curse 1*d*. H——! 1½*d*.
D——! 2*d*. B——! 3*d*.

For the conveneince of Members we have invented a new word which they can use, a harmless but good word to use in times of great provoction, this is it, Blamm!

RULE 4.—Honesty is the best policey, & we must put our fines in the box even if nobody hears us.

RULE 5.—If a Member has not a ¼*d*. wait till you can put in a ¼*d*.

RULE 6.—When the box is full, or after every week, it will be opened & counted & Members make a Ballot on what the money is to be spent. Nota beeny, if its sweets it must be ones we all like.

THIS is to GRATIFY that we all AGREE with these RULES.

(*Here followed some deeply indented signatures, written with a blunt pencil dipped in ink.*)

Results of opening Dec. 1. 11½*d*. (spent in Peppermints).
Results of opening Dec. 7. 3*d*. (spent in Toffee).

This was the last entry. Evidently the S.P.S. had been so successful that it was needed no more.



THE JUMBLE SALE

"HONESTLY, MRS. HIGGINS, I THINK THAT HAT LOOKS *AT LEAST* WORTH A SHILLING."

To Dance, to Skip

THE world has many a manly trade
And each must play his part;
Some of us ply the aching spade,
Some have a dab at Art;
And I put foremost in the scale
The *genus* ballet-dancer (male).

Mark, ere he settles down to work
Unsmiling and austere,
How he declines to smile and smirk;
None of your grinnings here;
What stark aloofness he reveals
Merely by walking on his heels.

Now, as an athlete puts the weight,
He hoists on upraised palm
The female of the species straight
Above him, calm as calm,
And gives, perhaps, a casual twirl
Though, mind you, she's a well-built girl.

Anon—you'll ponder this, I beg—
He twines her round him, or
Sweeps her by one frail arm and leg
In circles near the floor,
Or turns her upside-down, as though
That were the way she ought to go.

E'en then she has but brief reprieve;
As you have seen in docks
Strong men exuberantly heave
The chilled imported ox,
He hurls her off to one who stands
And takes the catch with ready hands

And, smartly fielding, throws her back;
Think of him as you will,
This, I maintain, is no mere knack
But sheer unearthly skill;
The thing is genius, muscle too;
I couldn't do it, nor could you.

But when she goes, and he remains
To do his private bit,
If high agility and brains
Is what you want, he's It;
I don't care what you say, it's then
One hails him as a man of men.

Yet there are some with minds so blank,
Of intellects so dim,
That one has known them up and thank
Their gods they're not like him.
Strange that such vandals there should be;
Unless one happens to agree. DUM-DUM.



THE FIRST FRUITS OF FITNESS

"I FEEL SO BRACED UP BY THESE NEW PHYSICAL EXERCISES THAT I BELIEVE I SHALL BE ABLE TO VOTE THIS TIME AND PUT IN A DAY'S WORK AT THE OFFICE AS WELL."

Impressions of Parliament

Synopsis of the Week

***Monday, February 22nd.*—Commons: Debate on Coronation Plans.**

***Tuesday, February 23rd.*—Lords: Various Bills Advanced.**
Commons: Debate on Gresford Colliery Disaster.



DAMOCLES' SWORD

Sir STAFFORD CRIPPS. "ANYHOW, THIS SPEECH OUGHT TO POSTPONE THE FATAL MOMENT."

***Wednesday, February 24th.*—Lords: Debate on Foreign Policy.**
Commons: Debate on Revision of Block Grants.

Monday, February 22nd.—Not without irony is the situation created by the despatch of an official letter to the Abyssinian Minister in London inviting his Government to send a representative to the Coronation, for the PRINCE OF PIEDMONT is supposed to be coming as the Italian delegate, and his father has already had what is said by Signor MUSSOLINI to be the mantle of Abyssinia draped over his shoulders. If Dr. MARTIN were to come as well, friction would be difficult to avoid; yet, since he is still the Abyssinian Minister, he is perfectly entitled to his invitation. The Spanish Government, as Lord CRANBORNE also announced this afternoon, have had an invitation too, which should provide someone with a welcome holiday.

The poultry industry, which seems to be in a particularly bad way even for the poultry industry, was the subject of numerous questions from Members, who resented the large increase in the number of imported eggs. Mr. TURTON, who was amongst them, told the House of the perfect Front Bench cycle which his question had described; when he had put it last week to the PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE he had been advised to address it to the MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, and, having done so, he had been referred to the MINISTER OF MINES, who had then referred him to the previous answer. This is one of the neatest concerted passing movements which has been seen for some time at Westminster, where lovers of the Rugby code can frequently find good sport.

The Supplementary Estimate for Coronation expenses was carried with the official support of the Labour Party, which had been represented on the Coronation Committee; of the few Members who objected, Mr. GALLACHER could hardly do anything else than condemn the whole affair as a political demonstration.

Tuesday, February 23rd.—The debate on the disaster in the Gresford Colliery in September, 1934 (the subject of a Report recently presented to Parliament) was limited by the probable imminence of legal proceedings arising from it and by the fact that it has been found necessary to keep the area of the explosion sealed up; but in view of the Commissioner's comments there could be little dispute that the mine had been inefficiently managed and that the growing danger of gas should have become apparent to the inspectors in time to avert the tragedy.

In these circumstances the House agreed to the motion of the Opposition stating that grave responsibility rested upon the country and Parliament to prevent similar disasters by the adoption of effective measures.

Although no one had anything but praise for the manner in which Sir HENRY WALKER, the Chief Inspector, had conducted the investigation and even criticised his own Department, it was generally felt that in any future case the Commissioner should be appointed from an independent source.



THE HASTINGS FREE-LANCE

LORD EUSTACE PERCY

The absence of complaints in the North Wales area which was a feature of 1934, as the MINISTER pointed out, brought up the question of victimisation, and the Labour Party insisted that the reason why men continued to work in what they knew to be conditions of daily danger was that a complaint so often meant dismissal on some pretext a few months afterwards.

Mr. GRENFELL, their first spokesman, said that the only mystery about the explosion was that it had not occurred earlier, and he asked if there must not be something radically wrong when a mine could get into such a state without a hint of danger reaching the divisional inspector; Mr. PEAKE, a coal-owner, confessed that he would feel deeply humili-



Big Ben (to LITTLE BENN*):* "WELCOME, LITTLE STRANGER!"



"THE PASSION OF THESE PEOPLE FOR ENGLISH ANTIMACASSARS HAS BROUGHT LIFE TO AN INDUSTRY THAT WAS PRACTICALLY MORIBUND."

ated if a similar report could be made on any pit of his; Mr. ARTHUR HENDERSON and Sir STAFFORD CRIPPS, who had both been connected with the legal side of the inquiry, made out that the conflict between profits and workers' safety could only be resolved by abolishing private ownership of the industry; and the MINISTER, defending the individual inspectors, announced that he was drafting precautionary regulations while awaiting the Report of the Royal Commission which was still sitting.

Wednesday, February 24th.—All shades of opinion found expression in the Lords' debate on foreign policy, but nothing new was said; and those peers of the Right Wing who fulminated against the League made no suggestions for its reform and were unable to recommend as a substitute for its support any policy more effective than that of isolation.

Lord ARNOLD, who opened the debate with an attack on our traditional alliance with France, urged that we should withdraw from the insoluble quarrels of the Continent but omitted to explain how this remarkable insulation was to be achieved. As for the Franco-Russian Pact, there would be no European settlement, he prophesied, while this existed.

After Lord MOUNT TEMPLE had described Germany as the spearhead of the proposals for disarmament and exhorted the Foreign Office to be more friendly to her, Lord NEWTON had revelled in the fact that he had never been to Geneva, Lord RUSSELL had



OUR BACK-BENCH *WHO'S WHO*

This is Miss MEGAN L. G.
Who invariably
Supports each fresh fad
Of her Dad.

emphasised the futility of any sort of war and the wisdom of positive pacifism, Lord STONEHAVEN had quoted from *Mein Kampf* and argued against the return of the German colonies, and Lord STRABOLGI had compromised by supporting Lord RUSSELL in theory while stating that his Party was prepared to fight for intellectual freedom, Lord PLYMOUTH for the Government reminded the isolationists that science had completely queered their doctrine and repeated that our policy would continue to aim at restoring the authority of the League.

In the Commons the Opposition were unable to find much to say against the Government's Bill for altering the formula laid down by the Local Government Act of 1929 so as to give larger grants to poorer areas beyond the objection that many towns would still be desperately hard hit. The most interesting speech was that of Lord EUSTACE PERCY, who maintained that no general grant system could meet the needs of the most stricken areas, and therefore strongly criticised the principle that the Commissioner for Special Areas should be forbidden to give grants to services already assisted by Ministries in London.

Non-Intervention in Australia

I HAVE become accustomed to getting my news from Spain nightly in two sections—two stereoscopic views which, when focussed together, give me a pretty good picture of the state of affairs there.

Usually they have gone something like this:—

(1) A report from Salamanca states that General FRANCO'S troops have attacked strongly at several points in the Guadarama sector, capturing two Russian tanks and a vast quantity of equipment.

(2) A telegram from Valencia states that Government troops have repulsed several attacks north of Madrid, inflicting heavy losses on the Insurgents and capturing several prisoners (including three Italians) and a large amount of ammunition and stores.

Putting (2) and (1) together, I gather that there is very little change in the situation and that in fact nobody has done anything much to write home about.

On the whole this works pretty well. It is better than reading through long despatches from war correspondents of varying shades of political thought, sifting the grain of fact from the chaff of verbose conjecture and then getting only a stone that has been left unturned (if you know what I mean).

It occurs to me that I should be better served if I could get my Test Match news from Australia in similar manner. Why not promote a League of Something to appoint a committee or sub-committee to fix a date to get together representatives of the M.C.C. and the Australian Board of Control to consider a formula for a ban on the intervention of troops of cricket correspondents there? Let us instead have reports only from the G.O.C. on either side.

For instance:—

(*a*) ALLEN reports that his men have to-day established themselves in an attacking position by knocking Australian bowling to all parts of the ground, scoring no fewer than 168 runs and needing only 212 more to get on terms. He adds that they are meeting with considerable success in their task of wearing out both the enemy bowlers and the wicket.

(*b*) BRADMAN states, in a wire from Melbourne, that Australia has to-day captured three of the best English wickets for a paltry score, and he hopes to dislodge the rest of the opposing force decisively in the next three or four days. He himself is confident of being able to produce a bigger century than HAMMOND in the second innings.

That would save me many hours' listening to radio commentaries on the day's play and reading all sorts of accounts in the papers. I should even have time to eat my meals in peace and quiet.

After all, Test Matches should be fought out on the turf, not on writing-table or typewriter. Let us debunk one more proverb—that "The Pen is mightier than the Sward."



"SURELY, PHYLLIS, YOU MIGHT HAVE PUT THIS IN A SAFE PLACE WHILE YOU WERE DUSTING!"
"WELL, YOU SEE, MA'AM, IT FELL IN THE GRATE *THIS* TIME—IT ALWAYS FELL ON THE MAT BEFORE."

At the Play

"Suspect" (St. Martin's)

The curtain has not been up for many minutes at the St. Martin's Theatre and we have not seen much of the middle-aged *Mrs. Smith* in her quiet Cornish home before we grow pretty certain that here is a house harbouring some grim secret. *Mrs. Smith* is more unpleasant, more nervy, more hostile to her future daughter-in-law than any ordinary past could explain. But how formidable the secret is we do not begin to learn until the arrival of the rubicund and eupeptic *Sir Hugo Const*, a newspaper magnate. *Sir Hugo* never forgets a face, and although he does not recognise *Mrs. Smith*, he recognises *Goudie* (Miss Jean Cadell), the forbidding Scotch maid.

The dramatist scatters his little clues with a masterly apparent casualness. Why does *Mrs. Smith* suddenly burn a handkerchief with blood on it? Why does she hate the sight of newspapers in the house? Why is it so plain that both she and her maid come from Scotland and refuse to admit it? The play is so well done and will, I hope, enjoy so long a run that I will not mar the enjoyment for anyone by answering these questions bluntly and openly.

The past, whatever it was, matters very much, in particular to *Dr. Rendle* (Mr. Campbell Gullan), because his daughter (Miss Andrea Troubridge) is on the verge of marrying *Mrs. Smith's* only son, and the doctor relies on his old friend *Sir Hugo* to help him to prevent the marriage if what they fear is true. *Sir Hugo's* wife (Miss Doris Lytton) is a shrewd and knowledgeable woman and makes her own contribution to the excitement of the week-end. Her husband, acted by Mr. David Horne, is an immensely real individual of a kind that, on a fortunate day and in a first-class carriage, one meets on a long railway journey, and his acting entitles Mr. Horne to a large share of the credit for the convincing and unstrained way in which extraordinary happenings become easily credible.

There is one perilous moment for the dramatist in the Third Act, when it looks as though an unprofitable re-opening of remote events in close detail is going to be attempted; but the dialogue is very well handled (better here indeed than in the First Act, which is a little slow and humdrum in parts), and the Third Act, which is so often an anticlimax in exciting plays, finishes in the race for high marks neck-and-neck with the Second Act. It could hardly hope to be better, but it does not let its predecessor down.



WOMEN WITH A PAST

Mrs. Smith . . . . . Miss Mary Morris
Goudie . . . . . Miss Jean Cadell

To a degree unusual in thrillers *Suspect* turns on the performance of one character. Time and again our eyes are glued on the severe features of *Mrs. Smith*, and for those moments the play lives in the set of her jaw and the resolution of her eye. It is a tremendous strain that Miss Mary Morris, an actress from America new to the London stage, has to bear in this part, and from the first surreptitious gestures and disclosures down to the tremendous final curtain she carries the play along, maintaining a command of the performance equal to *Mrs. Smith's* own grasp of the crisis. It is a remarkable performance and the corner-stone of a remarkable evening.

We are too interested to want much light relief, but some, of a very delicate comedy character, is provided by Mr. Stafford Hilliard as the local parson, coping gallantly and tactfully with the many difficulties that are made for him. D.W.



AMATEUR CRIMINOLOGISTS

Sir Hugo Const . . . . . Mr. David Horne
Dr. Rendle . . . . . Mr. Campbell Gullan

"Big Business" (Hippodrome)

This is a title which is likely to acquire added significance, for the piece will presumably settle down into another of the long runs which are now so common at the Hippodrome. The same team has been at work, led by Mr. K. R. G. Browne, and has long since arrived at an accurate estimate of the requirements of a well-fed, easily ignited audience determined to expend the minimum of cerebral energy. Once again the handling of the attack has been safely left to Mr. Ralph Reader, who can bring a chorus as near perfection as anyone in London. And the cast is headed by that doughty and well-proved quartet, Miss Vera Pearce, Miss Bertha Belmore, Mr. Bobby Howes and Mr. Wylie Watson.

Their frolics are untrammeled by any pretence at a coherent story, but so far as the outline goes it is dictated by the visit of the inventor of a new machine for decarbonising the human face (Mr. HOWES) to the proprietress of a beauty-salon (Miss PEARCE), who promises to buy the contraption in dozens if only he will steal a family-portrait which her mercenary sister (Miss BELMORE) is about to sell for five thousand pounds. Naturally the inventor accepts the terms, and naturally (this being musical-comedy) on arrival at Mulberry Hall he finds himself competing with a professional crook (Mr. DAVID BURNS) in the pay of an unscrupulous art-collector, and under the lugubrious observation of a detective (Mr. WATSON) in the meagre pay of the mercenary sister. A pageant which is being performed in the grounds is enough to explain the large number of rhythmical young ladies with which the place abounds.



INTRODUCING THE PERFECT MAN

Sexton Holmes . . . . . MR. WYLIE WATSON
Jimmy Rackstraw . . . . . MR. BOBBY HOWES
Annabelle Ray . . . . . MISS VERA PEARCE

I could have wished that Mr. HOWES had danced more, but otherwise he is given plenty of scope to exercise his spritely talents. He is like a shining little pinnace darting between the two battleships of the line, Miss PEARCE and Miss BELMORE, and gambolling in their maternal wake; there is a startling depth of innocence in his quite circular eyes, and sometimes his elfin pathos is too affecting to be funny. But the next moment his brazen impudence comes quickly to the rescue and rights the balance, so that one can laugh freely again. I think his happiest moments here are during the pageant, when he slanders the good name of Sherwood Forest in a number of original ways.

Miss PEARCE, who is a comic actress of unusual resource, is an ideal pivot for this kind of show, for she works exceedingly hard and everything she does bears the imprint of a vital personality. Miss BELMORE is also thoroughly effective; the sudden coyness of a stern aunt, melted, is her peculiar province, and her special synthesis of all the academic pomposities must bring solace to thousands of schoolgirls who can at last laugh openly at their headmistress. As for Mr. WATSON, he is given a better run than he had last time. To my mind he is a great comedian within his own limits, full of the real stuff of human absurdity. Saloon-bars at one o'clock are crammed with little men looking much as he does, and his cleverness is to give us one of them with, so to speak, the lid off. There is a glorious passage here when he puts on an armchair and takes Miss PEARCE on his knee; but whatever he does is worth watching





THE ARMCHAIR DETECTIVE

Sexton Holmes . . . MR. WYLIE WATSON

The most impressive newcomer to the team is Mr. BURNS, who takes a part of very much the same kind as he played in *Three Men on a Horse*—a lyrically tough Bowery-boy.

The best of quite a good bunch of songs, which have the advantage of being really sung, is one called "I've Got a Thing About You." With one notable exception, for the South American dance, the dresses are uncomfortably coloured.

Special mention must be reserved for the highly ingenious typewriter-accompaniment to the slow tap-dance of the Chorus in the opening scene. You can almost hear the girls' feet spelling out "With ref. to yours of the 5th ult." ERIC.

Domestic Problem

"LOSH! Mirren, yon's a bonny ring.
Hoo got ye sic an unco thing?
It's awfu' smairt an' dinkie."
"Ah got it in a present like.
Ma boy he sold his mo'or-bike
An' bo't it for ma pinkie."

"Losh! Mirren, you're the lucky lass,
A-coortin' wi' a lad o' class.
Ah doubt ye'll sune be flittin'?"
"Wae's me! Ah'll need tae bide a while.
His mither says Ah'm no their style—
A '*general*' 's no fittin'.

" She canna thole her lad sud wed
Wi' me that's only sairvice-bred
(Nae typist, to ma sorrer).
Gin Ah had lairnin' frae a buik,
Forbye Ah couldna clean or cook,
She'd hae us ca'd to-morrer."

The Modern Girl

"Les soirées de Suvretta sont plus familiales, mais dans le sens anglais du mot. C'est-à-dire qu'on dine sur le coup de neuf heures, dans le plus impeccable des smokings, parmi les dos nus les plus variés, pour aller finir la soirée dans un fauteuil profond des vastes salons, sir Smith lisant le *Times*, l'honorable Mrs. Smith tricotant et miss Smith, fraîche comme un bonbon anglais, savourant Dickens ou Fenimore Cooper."—*French paper's account of life at St. Moritz.*

Lecture-Tour

NOVELISTS are very often to be found—supposing anybody should be mad enough to look for them—either just off to America on a lecture-tour or just back from America after a lecture-tour.

I myself am just back from . . . and so on.

The following rather brilliant little piece of dialogue has taken place, quite naturally and spontaneously, between myself and most of the people I know.

"I thought you were on a lecture-tour in America?"

"Oh, I've come back again."

"Oh, have you?"

"Oh, yes, I have."

No wonder, you will say, that the Americans are anxious to hear us English novelists when we can put across stuff like that. But the question one is considering at the moment is no longer what to say to the Americans but what to say to the English. They will ask—at least, if they have any sense of decency whatever they will—what America was like. "Did you go to Oshkosh?" they will inevitably inquire. "Tell us about Seattle, Buffalo, and Sewickley, Pa." And what is one to reply?

Surely it will be definitely discouraging and bad for international relationships just to say that it was practically impossible to pin down any impression at all of places reached at dawn after a night in the train and left behind in less than twenty-four hours preparatory to another night in the train?

Besides, the human mind is finite, as was long ago discovered by *Mr. Fairchild* and as he repeatedly told his family. And besides being finite, it is downright *odd* and frightfully apt to remember all the wrong things.

For instance, when asked "And what was your impression of Fall River?" am I to reply—

"That was the place where one of the most prominent members of the Women's Club told me that she was taking nine separate relations over to the British Coronation"?

Or, again, when somebody says—

"Now do tell us what *Albany* was like. I once met such a nice man travelling in the Bernese Oberland, and I distinctly remember that he said he came from Albany."

(Then why the dickens didn't you ask *him* to tell you what it was like?)

The true answer to this might very well be—

"Oh, Albany. You mean *Albany*. The people I stayed with there were kinder than almost anybody. They offered to have all my handkerchiefs washed and ironed; and the maid mended my black frock for me most beautifully."

In one's more desperate moments one has even contemplated putting the whole thing into verse, just so as to distract the attention—

"By the time I had reached Oklahoma
I had fallen into a kind of coma."

Or—

"The people of Michigan, at a place
called Lancing,
Positively declared that my British
accent was entrancing."

Theoretically good. Actually it may be taken as a certainty that one's friends would direct their curiosity on to places like Fort Worth, Texas, or Columbus, Ohio, for which rhymes entirely fail to present themselves. So that there one is back again where one began.

"Tulsa, I believe, was *either* the place where I was told that the new Town Hall was going to be pulled down because it had stood nearly ten years already and was all out-of-date, or *else* it was the place where they gave me alligator-pear salad, and it was lovely."

"Dayton, Ohio? On no account mention Dayton, Ohio, to me. The bottle of emulsified coconut-oil shampoo broke just as the train was getting into the station and everything smelt of it for weeks and weeks afterwards."

Obviously this kind of thing isn't going to do good to anybody.

And to say, "Well, it was all marvellous, and even if the trains were rather hot the drinking-water was always iced," lets down practically the whole *prestige* of English literature.

One's only hope is that somebody may say—

"I hear you went to Indianapolis. Now do tell me all about Indianapolis."

Certainly.

Without a moment's hesitation.

Indianapolis?

I couldn't *ever* forget it.

That was the very first place where I got my letters from home. E. M. D.



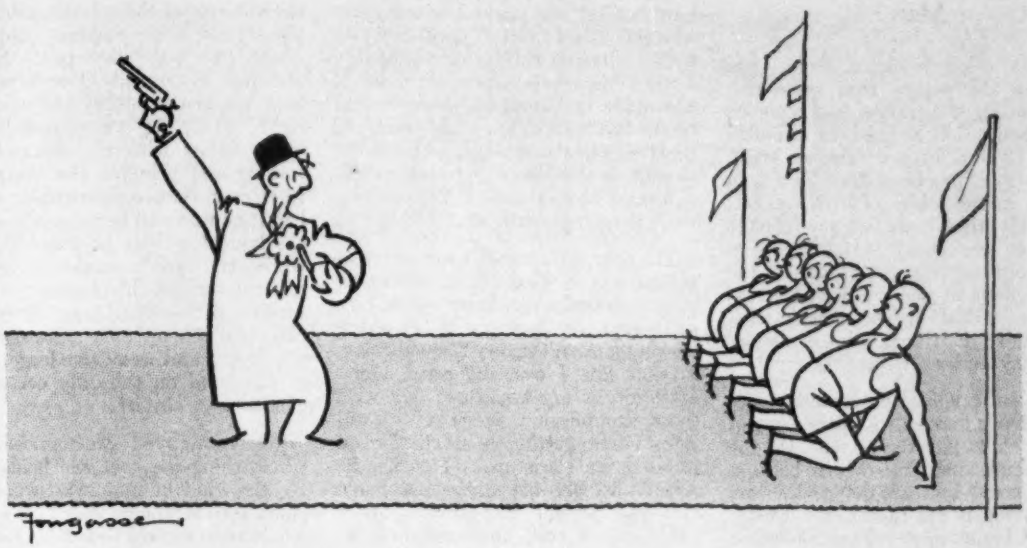
BIG BUSINESS.

High Water

"THE scholars was greatly elevated on account of the big wather," their elders say now of the joyous and untimely return of children cut off from the Bawnoge school-house by the sudden uprising of the small stream at the foot of Foley's Hill. Not that their delighted account of the flood was accepted without further investigation, for Gab Mooney himself went out immediately to make sure. And nothing the maligned scholars had said was a patch on his bulletin. "There's barbarous-lookin' waves upon it this minute," he reported of the overflow; "an' a grown man would be up to his top rib in it, let alone a child. There's no two ways in sayin' it—the holla is nothin' but one solid pool."

So began a February day that will long find a place in the annals of Foley's Cross. Undeterred by the driving rain, Gab took his stand at his own side of the flood. In the words of a song once so overwhelmingly popular as to have collapsed in the unexpected manner of all overworked things, he "covered the water-front." Here he prepared to enjoy himself in spite of the weather by turning back any traffic that had for its objective the village of Bawnoge. Especially gratifying was the halting of motor-vehicles and their grinding retreat backwards up the narrow hill in search of a possible turning-place, the harassed driver shrieking abuse as he went at the man who had let him come down that hill in the first place. "I never had a whole lot of toleration for that lad at all," Gab said later of the startlingly blond chauffeur from Derreen, resplendent in his smart dark uniform. "He puts me in mind of the one thing always, an' that's a white ass wid black tacklin's."

On the Bawnoge side of the overflow there was no need for a constant



"NOW I SHALL GIVE YOU EITHER 'ARE YOU READY? . . . BANG!' OR—IF THIS PISTOL DOESN'T WORK, AS IT VERY LIKELY WON'T—'ARE YOU READY? . . . CLICK!'"

watcher, though for an hour one of the Civic Guards lingered there doing what Mr. Mooney called "pattherowlin' the far bank of the Big Wather." Thanks to his report to the village and that of the frustrated postman, Bawnoge accepted the fact that the road was impassable—or rather "unpossible." Some of them did travel as far as Foley's Hill that day, but only to see the sight for themselves and to add their own impressions to the dramatic current reports. "If God Almighty was to disclose His arrangements to Gab Mooney the way He did to Noah," the postman said, "he'd be workin' overtime at an ark this minute, for the flood is risin,' an' he's gone a sort of timid all right."

Except for the very obstinate driver of Maher's army mule, everyone heeded Gab's warning of the depth of the overflow; but he tried to drive through. "He wouldn't be said be me," the unofficial watcher told the crowd that had gathered at the frantic outcry of the marooned driver, whose temperamentalsteed, becomingalarmed when he was halfway through, had decided to remain immovable, but on second thoughts had added insult to injury by taking a long drink. The long-delayed and then too hasty descent of young Maher into the icy water was greeted with cheers that so encouraged the animal as to make it "wheegee around" and hurry back, leaving its half-drowned driver to follow when he liked. "I always said the one thing about that ould mule," an onlooker said delightedly, "he's a rale cut of an anti-teek."

All that night the rain went on falling, and still the water rose at the foot of Foley's Hill, and in the morning the conscientious Mr. Mooney took his stand there once more in the beating rain and watched in vain for would-be travellers. Trying hard to get some shelter in Foley's gateway, he remembered the advice given to him the night before by a young neighbour just back from a long spell of road-widening work in a more important district. "Why don't you do what them Ah Ah fellas does when there's deep wather on the road?" the youth had said. "An' that's to put up a post in the middle an' mark it off in feet an' inches, an' don't be standin' there in the down-powers; an' put a notice at the top of it tellin' them to Don't till the flood falls to a certain thing."

* * * * *

That afternoon the sound of hammering and of heavy breathing from Mooney's shed might well have suggested the building of another ark; but when Gab came out again he carried a wooden post, marked in sections and crowned by a cross-board at the top. At the cost of a severe wetting he carried this post into the flooded area and fixed it as firmly as possible into the sodden roadside grass below. Then very thankfully he waded out, feeling that all was well—that there was no need for him to stay there any longer.

On the cross-board the tarred uneven letters showed up plainly for any reader they might concern: "WHEN THIS BOORD IS OUT OF SIGHT IT 'S NOT SAFE TO CROSS THE FLOOD."

D. M. L.

One of the Old School?

BUT why decry
The old school tie
Which you or I
Can always buy
For half-a-crown
In any town?
Get them assorted by the box
And choose your school to match your socks.

Our Busy Legislators

"Mr. Wilson descried in the proposals the cloven hoof, and suggested that the Government were speaking with their tongue in their cheek, flying a kite and driving in a wedge which would make a cavity large enough to provide for nationalisation in industry."—*Local Paper.*

"I wonder why the average woman prefers to go about with expressionless eyes and no glasses, rather than look serene, resting peacefully on her nose."

Consulting Optician's Pamphlet.

Maybe she doesn't feel so well that way up.

Have You Ever Met a Con. Man?

EVERY other week, it seems, one reads in the papers that some rich American or Australian has reported to the police that he has been swindled out of £25,000 by a confidence trick. Invariably it has been done by a man he met in the lobby of a rich hotel; invariably that man has produced a friend or convenient total stranger; invariably they can get him in on the ground floor of some amazing hush-hush stock deal, or are at their wits' end how to distribute a lot of money to charity under a will.

Now personally I have never met a confidence man—at least not one of the big shots like the above. On the other hand, that probably is because I have never had £25,000 and so am very obviously not their type. I may, for all I know, have rubbed shoulders or even elbows with one or two of them—while waiting myself in the lobby of a rich hotel in the hope of meeting a rich friend; but no doubt I looked like the sort of small one they throw back in the river if they hook it by mistake.

A pity, because I'd rather like to have a friendly chat with one of these fellows and find out whether the whole thing is as incredible as it seems to me. For, like everyone else who prides himself on his commonsense—and there are precious few of us who don't—I feel convinced that I wouldn't fall for the charity gag or the Stock-Exchange gag, or even for buried gold. I'm willing to admit I might get it put across me by some new and ingenious yarn, but as far as I can discover they never, never have one. They always use the same old threadbare stories that anyone who has ever learnt to read a paper should surely know by heart are the con.-man's stock-in-trade. And they aren't even good stories to begin with, in my opinion; for would you, if you really had an absolute sure snip for a stock deal, dash off to share it with the first rich stranger from Australia you met in an hotel? Of course not. Or would I, if I really had several thousands to distribute to charities, ask for outside help? By Heaven I wouldn't; I'd try to keep the whole thing quite dark. The darker the better; *I* know where charity begins.

Another puzzling thing about confidence tricks is the quality of the victims. If they were invariably clergymen or maiden ladies or other admittedly unworldly people I'd understand it; but why is it nearly always the hard-headed self-made business-man who gets fooled? Surely the fellow who by his wits and ability—and probably a strict "no credit" approach to life—has made the world his oyster would be the last man to hand the resultant pearl over to any stranger who wanted to walk to the corner and back with it as a mark of good faith? Yet week by week they apparently do.

The only explanation I can arrive at is that it is all sheer charm of manner on the confidence-trickster's part; but, as I say, never having met any of the big shots, I don't know. The only chap in that line I ever did come across appeared at my home one day with some complicated story of pawn-tickets and getting home to Devon in time for Christmas. I gather he wanted to get his Christmas pants and the present for auntie out of hock, and, if that line went well, to borrow the fare to Devon. He had the pawn-tickets all right, because he was continually flourishing them at me like a conjurer—in fact doing everything with them except ask me to shuffle and cut the pack, so I could see they were genuine, but I wasn't so certain about the people in Devon. They'd send him the money at once, he explained, if only it wasn't too late to write a letter, or there was somebody at home to answer a wire, or they had happened to be on the telephone.

As I remember it, I eventually chose a card and did give him some money. But it wasn't his charm of manner that made me do it, for he was the nastiest bit of work I'd ever seen, with pimples and bad breath. It was simply the only way I could think of to get those pimples out of the house.

If not charm of manner, then I feel that perhaps con.-men must possess great shrewdness, but the only other case that came under my knowledge hardly confirms this. Or else the fellow concerned must have been the stupidest swindler practising in England. He stopped a friend of mine, whom we'll call Morris, crying out jovially, "Hu*llo*, hullo! Haven't seen you for ages. Bet you don't remember my name!" This was his sole scoring point, not only because Morris, who is notoriously bad at remembering names—he has to call half his acquaintances "old man" for this reason, and they wonder why he likes them so much—really thought he might know him after all. But when the chap went on, "My name's Davis. What about going and having one?" he guessed something was up, and when later, having adjourned to a local, the other fellow, instead of, as the initiator of the scheme, asking him what he'd take, suddenly suggested tossing to see who paid, he was certain. So quickly Morris pulled a coin out of his pocket and said, "All right! You call!" thus forestalling the other fellow with his double-headed shilling and bringing the thing down to an even chance right away. As luck had it he won and he promptly ordered the largest whisky he could think of, while the poor would-be trickster mournfully cut his losses as far as possible with a small beer. Morris then callously remembered an urgent appointment and went, one large whisky to the good on the only occasion he ever met a swindler.

What annoyed Morris about the whole thing was not the being taken for the kind of mug who would toss coins with strangers, but that a fellow who was so utterly bad at his job could yet go about trying to earn a living at it. But I very much doubt whether he is still practising; probably the fool has long ago paid out his double-headed shilling by mistake in a cigarette slot-machine.

Well, if that chap was a sample, then it can't be cleverness that gets confidence-tricksters into the big money. So perhaps it is just a sixth, or even seventh, sense which enables them to pick a victim who will believe anything as long as it is tied up with the chance of getting something for nothing. But here again it is all very confusing. For surely the fellow who already has £25,000 or more burning a hole in his pocket-book hasn't all that urge to try to win another £10,000? Do you believe I would? Well, since you ask me, perhaps yes; you never know. For if ever I found myself with £25,000 to spare I'd be prepared to believe anything. Even so you must admit it's all very confusing. I think one day I'll dress up like a rich American and go and stand in the Savritz lobby and see what happens. But I shan't lose any money—for obvious reasons.

A. A.

P.-C. Canute and Co.

"Sunset to-day: 6.54 p.m.
Sunrise to-morrow: 5.27 a.m.
High tide to-morrow: 8.57 a.m. and 9.25 p.m. checked by two policemen who had to use force."—*Natal Paper.*

"WHY NOT CORNER UMPIRES FOR RUGBY INTERNATIONALS?"
Headline in Daily Paper.

Well, we haven't the money, for one thing.



"I CAN'T THINK HOW YOU WRITE WITH THE BUS JOLTING LIKE THAT."
"YER GETS USED TO IT, LADY. WHY, WHEN I'M WRITING AT HOME I HAVE TO GET THE MISSUS TO SHAKE THE TABLE."

Fetch Down the Album

WHEN I get uppish there's only one cure
To banish my poise and my pride:
Fetch down the Album. It's certain and sure
Quite soon to have banished my "side."

Look at the naked child flat on the rug,
Rolling its marble eyes, shining and smug.
"First little footsteps at Saltcombe-on-Sea;"
Come stare more bravely, that baby is me.
Look at that creature with wires on her teeth!
(Thothe were the dayth when I learnt to thay "Treeth.")
Look at the chicken-wings moored to my hat;
How *could* my mother have dressed me like that?
Look at this cloche hat worn low to the lips!
Is it a wonder I never launched ships?

That's done the trick; I'm quite humble once more,
Now all of my uppishness fled.
Don't try to squash me when next I'm a bore,
Just fetch down the Album instead.



"'Ave you a smaller bellus than this, Mum? I tried to blow the fire *up*, but I blowed un *out*."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Cincinnatus at Downing Street

On the ground that a politician who gives more to his country than he gets out of it has an inescapable claim to understanding and gratitude, *Grey of Fallodon* (Longmans, 16/-) well deserves the penetrating, sympathetic and cumulatively impressive treatment he receives from Professor G. M. Trevelyan. Yet Grey, who deliberately sacrificed his eyesight to complete his eleven years at the Foreign Office, would, I think, have maintained that England left him her debtor. Of his two personalities—the man of affairs and the solitary nature-lover—it was the solitary who reaped his reward. Never, as Gladstone said, was a man with such aptitude for political life and so little inclination for it. Here the two careers—that of the bird-lover in the cottage on the Itchen and that of the spokesman of England's foreign policy during the War crisis—are distinguished and harmonised; and the policy is vindicated by eliminating impossible alternatives and identifying the one course possible with Grey's actual performance. Additional light on his difficulties and those of his party confirm my impression that Liberal Imperialism could not help resembling a cuckoo in the Liberal nest.

What Kipling Chose to Tell.

Rudyard Kipling had a flair for the apt title, and it did not desert him when in front of the brief essay in autobiography which engaged his latter days he wrote the words, *Something of Myself* (Macmillan, 7/6). For something it is, and something to be thankful for, but it is very far from everything, and a good way from what it is only human to have desired. Outspoken in opinion, Kipling was always notably reserved in personal manifestation. "On no provocation explain" is a phrase in this book. But though that sentiment is admirable, put into rigid practice it may defeat the proper end of autobiography; and throughout these pages one is perpetually tantalised by provocative glimpses followed by disappointing silences. Kipling knew intimately many famous men, and it is exasperating to reflect on what he might have told, and has not told, of Burne-Jones, of Henley and, above all, of Rhodes. Perhaps his nearest approach to an indiscretion is when he exposes a cousin, one day to be a Prime Minister renowned for his integrity, in the theft of a roly-poly pudding. Nevertheless the book is full of interest and attraction, being wrought with the old sure craftsmanship, some of the secrets of which it reveals. The pictures, particularly those of the 'prentice years, have colour and precision. The old loyalties and contempts are as strong as ever and as trenchantly expressed. To ask for more is, after all, to ask for something which would not have been Kipling.

Birth of a Tetralogy

Mr. COMPTON MACKENZIE, bravely building anew the large-scale testament of his time, for which *Sinister Street* failed (as he says) on account of the incidence of the Great War to provide adequately broad foundations, has set out to tell in four volumes the story of the generation that was in its 'teens at the beginning of the twentieth century. *The East Wind of Love* (RICH AND COWAN, 8/6) follows the adventures, intellectual, emotional and, in a moderate degree, spiritual, of young *John Ogilvie* during the short period—March, 1900, to October, 1901. How far we are to identify *John* (with his vehement dislike of "St. James's" and his leanings towards Roman Catholicism and Scottish Nationalism) with his author must remain a matter for interested conjecture; more important is the extraordinary care and completeness with which Mr. MACKENZIE details the development of his character. It is odd that, despite this intimate study, *John* is never, for me at least, a particularly appealing person. Perhaps he is a little dull, lacking (in common with nearly all the main actors in the story) a sense of humour. But this is a serious book, and Mr. MACKENZIE has a perfect right to make his characters serious-minded. My only other criticism concerns the method adopted to show the lines along which youth was thinking and feeling at the end of the Victorian era. The lengthy and profound discussions (generally between *John* and his younger Jewish friend, *Emil Stern*) on Imperialism, God and Humanitarianism, though in themselves valuable and providing indeed the real meat of the book, come so oddly from these very youthful lips as to read almost like interpolations. I refuse to believe that schoolboys of sixteen and seventeen, however precocious, ever conversed habitually in language of which BURKE himself would not have been ashamed. Still, this is an engrossing and stimulating start to a great undertaking.

Memories of a Chinese Magistrate

It is a thousand pities if, owing to a misleading title, a wholly captivating book should go unread. *The Flight of an Empress* (FABER AND FABER, 8/6) is actually the personal history of one WU YUNG—a youthful magistrate, gallant and upright, at the time of the Boxer rising. He tells how he tried to combine loyalty to "Old Buddha" and the Emperor with an impartial detestation of both Boxers and missionaries; how the Boxers (to his fury) accused him of being himself a convert or "Secondary Hairy One"—the missionaries themselves being "Hairy Ones"; and how he managed at enormous risk to enforce the imperial edicts until the Empress herself went over to the Boxers. When she fled he entertained her and improvised food and clothing so successfully that not only was he made purveyor to the flight but his cook received "a button of the sixth rank."



Skipper (to mate). "NO, NO, JOE, DON'T EGG ME ON. YOU KNOW THE COMPANY'S REGULATIONS ABOUT 'NO RACING.'"

His subsequent adventures include his ousting by eunuchs and officials—"Old Buddha" herself shedding tears into a red handkerchief—and many intimate encounters with the Premier, LI HUNG CHANG. His story, dictated in his seventies, has been translated by IDA PRUITT with a quaint baldness that renders it most delightful reading.

Concentrate of Ideas

To readers remembering certain works by Messrs. LOGAN PEARSALL SMITH, W. H. AUDEN and GEORGE BUCHANAN, I could, I think, give an exact idea of what is to be found in Mr. G. W. STONIER's admirable little book, *The Shadow Across the Page* (CRESSET PRESS, 5/-). But I am not entitled to assume your familiarity with these, and indeed to name them—now I have just thought of a fourth: TCHEHOV's *Note Books*—would imply quite wrongly that the book much resembles one or another. In fact it is a highly individual collection of short pieces of prose, ranging in length from one line to three pages. One of them propounds the view that "the only literary sin of any importance is to dilute one's originality," and Mr. STONIER has taken care to concentrate his. The pieces are mostly in the form of notes, and are designed to give an almost instantaneous impression (whether of a scene or of an idea), but the writing shows a consistent precision and brilliance unattainable except by hard work. I can think of no better explanation of the book and no better signpost to the reader than this, which the author himself gives: "The art of writing is not, as so many people suppose, to expand your ideas, but to squeeze them, like a ball of paper which will come to life when you open your hand."



"AMALGAMATED INTERCONTINENTAL RECIPROCAL TRANSPORT SERVICES SPEAKING."

Some Good Short Stories

I cannot help feeling that the publishers of Mr. BENEDICT THIELEN'S book, *Dinosaur Tracks* (MARTIN SECKER AND WARBURG, 7/6), claim a little too much when they say that each story has "a bite and a point." Anyway, the point of many of the stories escaped me, and I felt that their abrupt endings were intended to hint at a significance either not there or not worth troubling about. Yet the book has its exceptions, and this young American author knows how to use satire and wit and humour. The account of the auction-sale, where an old man watches his household gods being sold while he listens to the chat of the buyers and thinks back himself is brilliant and would have made a whole book. I like too the tale of the two school-mistresses on holiday in Venice, the sad little study of the ex-soldier whose family would not bother to share in his one great triumph, the bitter tale of Press methods, and the satirical sketch of a father's idea of a nice young man. In my opinion Mr. THIELEN is most effective when he allows his heart to rule his cleverness. There is no doubt though that he is clever.

Loves and Lives

Though Mr. MYRON BRINIG, in his latest very long novel, *The Sisters* (COBDEN-SANDERSON, 8/6), uses chapter headings sweet and simple, such as "The Buggy Ride," "A Terrible Scene," or "In the Park," you are not to expect from him anything like a Victorian innocence of utterance. Rather a real ground for complaint is that he has carried the convention of the moment, that demands ultra-plain speaking, to the point of monotony. Further, his story tends to split into three separate streams of narrative, all alike shadowed by drunkenness and sex-obsession, yet his work has real qualities to commend it. His many characters step forward in living personality—the sisters themselves, their considerable range of masculine admirers, and not least *Rose*, the mother, who embarks on a "knitting spree" when her emotions require an outlet; and though there is little positive action, yet at times a situation or grouping is suddenly thrown forward in intense relief. As a single example one might note the silhouette, against the turmoil and outrageous fury of San Francisco's earthquake and fire, of beautiful distressed *Louise* with the fat and psychic crystal-gazer. I have one small but important request to make of Mr. BRINIG. I should like him to consult a dictionary about the correct meaning of the word "transpire."

A Remarkable Legacy

A fertile idea controls *The Dumb Gods Speak* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 7/6), and Mr. E. PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM is entirely happy in his cultivation of it. In April, 1947, experiments destined to dominate the world are seen, or foreseen, to be taking place at a huge establishment in Nice, where *Mark Humberstone* (U.S.A.) and *Mr. Cheng* of China were intent upon making war impossible. Their methods in what they considered unimportant matters were, I admit, sufficiently robust. For instance, murder was deemed to be justifiable if humanity in bulk benefited by it. But it is unnecessary to quibble over this fact, for *Mark*, aided by patent inventions bequeathed to him by his father, and *Mr. Cheng* were mainly benefactors, and in the end they produced wonderful results. This tale is brimful of excitement and espionage.

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Charivaria

IT is claimed that if the Sahara Desert were irrigated it would be possible to grow vegetables there. To find spinach in the sand would be a pleasant reversal of the normal procedure.

* * *

Six different films may be made on the life of QUEEN VICTORIA. Mr. GEORGE ARLISS will not play the title *rôle* in any of them.

* * *

Three brothers named DAY have opened a surgery for the painless extraction of teeth in New York City. So we really must be allowed to observe that the DAYS are drawing out.

* * *

A market-gardener complains that nurserymen are always running out of gooseberry-bushes at this important time of the year. It seems a pity that they can't find something better to do.

* * *

A man who played the bagpipes outside a London police-station said he did it for a bet and did not expect any money from his listeners. However, they did send him out a couple of coppers.



* * *

Which reminds us of a Scottish writer's contention that playing the bagpipes is harder than manual work. That may be why so many people are in favour of shorter hours for pipers.

* * *

We are warned that if the noises of modern life continue, men in the future will have no ears. This is encouraging news for manufacturers of pince-nez.

* * *

A writer considers it a pity that the League of Nations wasn't formed before the Great War. It might by now have determined the aggressor.

* * *

Great satisfaction is expressed in official circles at the success of the steps taken to restrain Press intrusions into private affairs. It now only remains to restrain Press intrusions into public affairs.



An insurance manager was recently held up in his office by a stranger with a revolver. It is believed that the man may have wanted a cash surrender.

* * *

A literary critic says that there are two ZOLAS. So presumably Gorgon has a younger brother.

* * *

French villagers beat an unpopular tax-collector with umbrellas and walking-sticks. The gesture seems to have been quite unanimous: they all clubbed together.

* * *

"Owing to the monotonous nature of their work, switchboard operators are apt to develop a blank expression," says a scientist. He means a sort of automatic dial.

* * *

A writer on dietetics confesses that he hasn't eaten a muffin for seven years. He denies, however, that he is off his crumpet as well.



* * *

"What," asks a doctor, "can one do with the patient who throws his medicine out of the window?" Tell him to follow the directions on the bottle.

* * *

An Epping gentleman reports that he saw a hedgehog crossing his lawn while he was having breakfast one day last week, and he wants to know if this is earlier than usual. As we have no idea what time he has his breakfast we cannot say.

* * *

Many M.P.'s have taken up fencing as a pastime. Their knowledge of the sister art of hedging should be invaluable.

* * *

"See Addis Ababa and die" is Abyssinia's latest slogan.

* * *

According to a psychologist "push" is absolutely essential in some walks of life. This is particularly so if the walk leads through revolving doors.



This Precious Stone

HITLER and MUSSOLINI and I were taking tea together in a café in Vienna. (This is recent history, mind you; none of your old stuff about cracking a bottle of Australian Burgundy with GAUGUIN and DE MAUPASSANT in a dirty Montmartre attic in the late spring of 1880.) Things weren't going very well, for MUSSOLINI had got stuck in one of his more dictatorial attitudes—a kind of *status emphaticus*, you might call it—and it's hard work talking to a statue of Resolution. I urged him to unfold his arms, take off the funny little round hat he was wearing and drink his tea like a man.

"Take a rest, DUCE," I said—"take a rest. There are no cameras here."

You ought to have heard HITLER laugh.

Well, MUSSOLINI came out of his trance and pointed a finger at me (you know how he does it).

"The impertinence is typical of an Englishman," he said with true Roman *gravitas*. "You come of a rich and therefore aggressive people."

"I don't follow the 'therefore,'" I said. "Your distinguished precursor JULIUS had more sense. He liked to have men about him that were fat. It was the hungry sort, you remember, he considered dangerous. Herr HITLER would like some more butter, by the way."

"JULIUS CÆSAR?" mused MUSSOLINI, passing the dish. "Let me see. Weren't you people still barbarians when he began the conquest of your island?"

"Yes, yes," I sighed—

"One goes up
An' t'other goes down,
An' that's the way
The worl' goes roun'.

Which reminds me—how *are* things in Addis Ababa? Not many native barbarians left there, I gather?"

"The just but inflexible law of Italy——" he began.

HITLER hastily gave him a cream bun and took up the conversation.

"Never mind him," he said kindly. "He just uses the word 'aggression' because it comes natural to him. Nobody really thinks England aggressive. There's nothing she wants. The trouble is, you will try to keep what you've got. Now, that's a most unreasonable attitude in these days of international co-operation, especially when other countries happen to want some of your belongings. Germany needs raw materials, quite apart from the satisfaction of her imperial instincts, and the possession of colonies is vital to her economic progress. She demands the return of the territories stolen from her at Versailles."

"This is sheer GOEBBELS," I said. "But go on."

"In the moving words of Herr VON RIBBENTROP——"

"Ah!" I interrupted. "*Such* a nice man. But what a pity we don't see more of him. I used to think the business of an ambassador was to stay still and ambass, but he doesn't seem to care for that aspect of the profession. Really, it's hardly polite the way he's always flying back to Germany as if he couldn't stand the sight of us for two days together. And it must be so awkward for German nationals in London. 'May I see the Ambassador, please?' 'I'm sorry, but he's in Nuremberg at the moment, making an attack on Russia. Would you care to wait?' You do see what I mean, don't you?"

"We were talking about Germany's need for colonies," HITLER reminded me.

"Exactly," I said, and I drew a rapid sketch-map of Africa on the table-cloth, marking off certain territories with honey.

"Would South-West Africa and Tanganyika satisfy you?" I asked, indicating the shaded portions.

"Germany is always ready," said HITLER, "to negotiate on a basis of strict equality."

"Well, you can't have them," I said—"so there."

"Aggressive," said MUSSOLINI, wiping his chin. "That's what."

"Selfish, *I* call it," said HITLER.

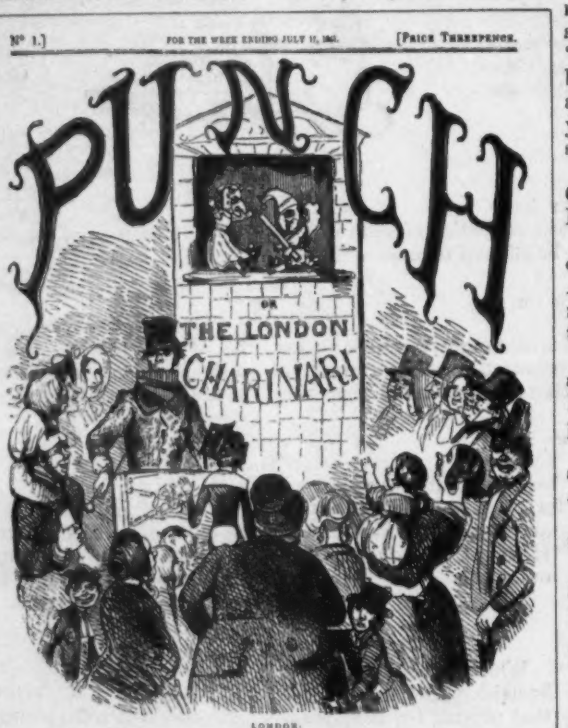
I left them and wandered out into the streets, brooding on the misfortunes of my country. Nobody seems to realise, I thought sadly, what good fellows we really are. We are perpetually misunderstood. Those two dictators, dear fellows both, are just about typical. And even those we particularly try to please bear us nothing but ill-will. Look at India and Palestine and Egypt. Look, I said to myself with a shudder, at Ireland. Nobody loves us.

In despair I bought a Continental edition of an English daily paper and glanced idly through its pages. A headline caught my eye—

"SENATOR BORAH'S CORDIAL REFERENCE TO GREAT BRITAIN"

I think I must have swooned.

H. F. E.



Nº 1.] FOR THE WEEK ENDING JULY 17, 1841. [PRICE THREEPENCE.

LONDON:
PUBLISHED FOR THE PROPRIETORS, BY R. BRYANT,
AT PUNCH'S OFFICE, WELLINGTON STREET, STRAND.

In this, his 5,000th Number, Mr. Punch takes the liberty of reproducing the cover in which he made his first appearance before the public nearly 96 years ago. The letter which follows is quoted as a sample of the literature inside.

Lord Melbourne to "Punch"

MY DEAR PUNCH,—Seeing in the "Court Circular" of the *Morning Herald* an account of a General Goblet as one of the guests of Her Majesty, I beg to state, that, till I saw that announcement, I was not aware of any other *general gobble it* than myself at the Palace.—Yours truly, MELBOURNE.

Jokes were jokes in those days.

"MEDIUM EGGS 1/9."
Poultry Farm Notice.

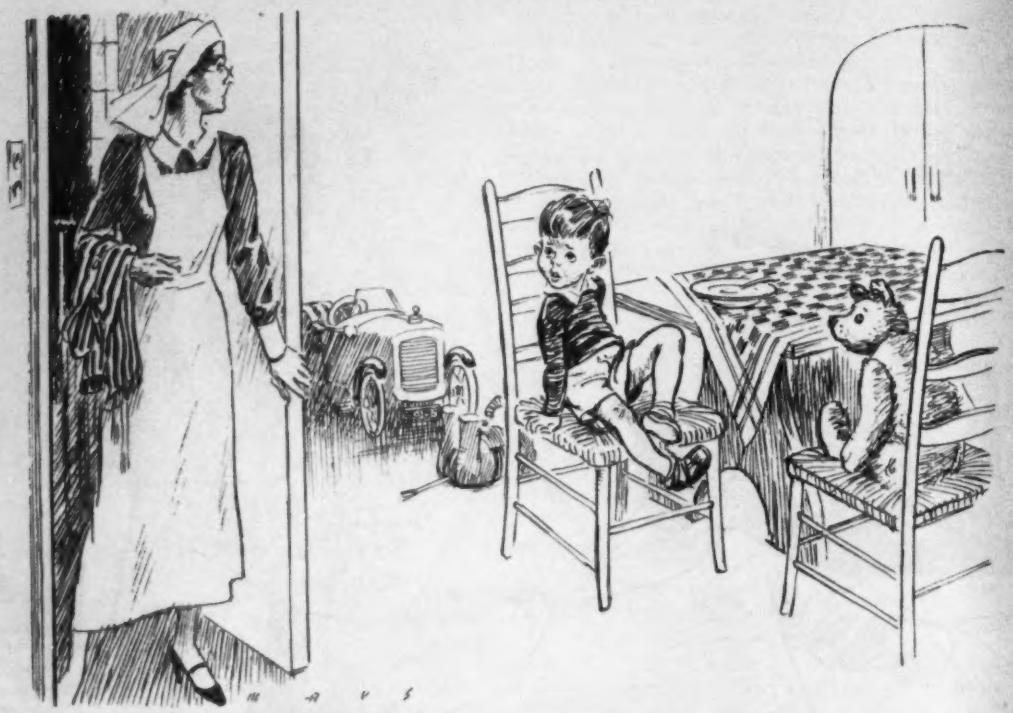
If they respond to rappings we don't want them.



SPECIAL ARIA

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR SINGS—

"COME LIVE WITH ME AND BE MY LOVE
AND WE WILL ALL THE MEASURES PROVE . . ."



"NOW, JOHN, BE A GOOD BOY."
"WELL, WHAT MUSTN'T I DO?"

Where Due, Apologies; or, the Up-to-date Editorial

Editor Snoop, man-at-the-wheel of *Scandaletter*, Britain's newest and snappiest news magazine, assesses past week as under:—

Beyond doubt style layout format last week's *Scandaletter* put tom cat amongst literary pigeons. Opines reader Smallbone (Bexley) "Your paper makes me sick." Apologies reader Smallbone for nausea caused. In minority, he. Last number *Scandaletter* (Unsuspected Ramps souvenir issue) out-sold by mid-mealtime day of printing. In eating, proof of pudding.

Meanwhile *Scandaletter* revelations not to taste of pipe-smoking Prime Minister Baldwin. Pig-fancying Premier summoned special Cabinet conclave *à propos Scandaletter* spotlight on plot to murder little Princesses in Tower. "Outrageous" fulminated Cabinet Convener Hankey, oyster-lipped State secret keeper. Dispersed nation-counsellors without decision reached. Suppression *Scandaletter* assessed unwise. Cautious seal-holders fear outcry, demand for full facts *re* revelations. Justified, they; enthusiastic mail approves *Scandaletter* policy. Typewriter-clicker Moon (Cheam) single spaces, "I think your magazine wonderful in its lack of bias and extraordinary knowledge of the inner facts. How do you do it?" Right is mechanised writer Moon. Axes to grind none in news-magazine *Scandaletter*. Available are exclusive facts.

Last week public convulsion elections Council London County. "Save London from Socialism" motto of Municipal Reform boss Webbe. Herbert (Waterloo Bridge) Morrison saddled with unwelcome ally Communists. In tough spot, he. Publicly orated Morrison "I would not stoop to such tactics." Beaverbrook newsheet *Evening Standard*, snubbed by Morrison, headlined rebuff capitalled Communist menace.

In the news, poet-publicist Osbert Sitwell. In court claimed injunction, alleging copyright infringement National Rat Week verse-essay. Queried by cable "Are you author poem?" wise-cracked Sitwell "Sez you." Cryptic cabler Osbert now pursuing action.

Also in news—battleship *Royal Oak* splinter-struck Spanish waters. Naval men remember sabotage and court-martial, suspect hoodoo-harbourer. Queries sailor reader Pruk (Bootle) "Why are not ships with unlucky records immediately withdrawn from service and scrapped? All naval men know that an unlucky ship can be dangerous to the lives of her crew." Reminds correspondent Pruk naval expert *Scandaletter Royal Oak* cost £1,000,000 for recent overhaul. Scrap-scheme expensive superstition.

In news-columns present issue, inside story picturesque Court of Claims for King Emperor—coronation ceremony pending May. Recently wedded youthful Norfolk Duke assists decision on ceremonial privileges. Labour thorn-in-side left winger legalist Cripps contemptuously designates "Bunkum." Bristol-representing knight Stafford Cripps much in the news. Born rebel, he. Cripps-led, united-front-seeking Socialist League alarms more staid Labour bosses. Unavoidable a contre-temps. Recently mild left Parliamentarian Party Labourists refused expulsion motion, retained capable speaker Gresford colliery disaster investigator Cripps. Satirises situation

left-wing cartoonist Low. Characteristic Low-drawing shows Cripps as Jonah in internally troubled Labour whale.

In Australia, denials of revived body-line racket. Lunching with kangaroo wonder-bat Bradman, fast-bowling Australian born English captain "Gubby" Allen enthuses "The whole tour has been conducted in a most friendly and sporting atmosphere." Popular all-rounder Allen visited Australia with last team, survived then friction well. Accepts Australian opinion, no body-liner he. Cricket opinion from reader Pillinger (Poole) "Since Test Matches seem to be so much dependent on the toss, why not cut out the cricket, which leads to a great deal of ill-feeling, and simply toss for the 'Ashes'? Cannot *Scandaletter* use its influence?" Reply to cricket abolisher Pillinger—tossing for Ashes has been constantly advocated by *Scandaletter*. Loss of gate receipts unconvincingly urged by critics as reason for not adopting. *Scandaletter* will continue influence-use on M.C.C., Colonial Office.

Abroad, excitement heralding Britain's £1,500,000,000 protection plan small. "Colossal" says Berlin. Reports Right Press "Foreign opinion impressed." On nature of impression silent they. Self-appointed Cantab scientist anti-war agitators challenge Government with gas precautions pamphlet. State retort experts "A gas-proof room and a gas tight room are not the same thing." Escapes meanwhile gas from *Scandaletter* critic Prinny (Wookey). Reproves Prinny "I had always thought your paper was patriotic. But after your disgusting suggestion that the British Navy was no longer a complete defence for the country, I am withdrawing my subscription." In last century lives late subscriber Prinny. Unbiassed *Scandaletter* does not seek to knock Navy. Constantly enunciate experts "The coming of the long-range bomber has revolutionised modern war." Goer down to the sea in ships Prinny sees insult where is ordinary commonsense.

In Fleet Street a flutter. Angry Parliamentarians denounce "publication of unsavoury details" and "prying into private lives." Chief Press critic Architect M.P. Bossom. Unanimous support from Press led by *Scandaletter*. *Scandaletter* inflexibly opposed publication of scare-stories, filth, impudent inventions. In the right, Bossom. Final test infallibly gentlemanly public taste must be. Of this is illustration astonishing *Scandaletter* sales increase.

Concludes this week's editorial now. Editor *Scandaletter* sick-home an entrant into. Has brain fever and spots before the eyes, he. Next week, more.

Thames Valley Floods

Ornamental Waters
Came within the night,
And where the garden dips a bit
Is now a plain of light.

Where the emerald grasses
Struggled with the stones
The gentle waves are lapping soft
In dulcet undertones.

Will it last till Easter?
Shall we launch a boat
And give a boating afternoon
With toast and tea afloat?

You shall wear your boater
And I will wear my white
On our Ornamental Waters
That came within the night.

J. G.



"I SUPPOSE YOU AIN'T GOT A VACANCY FOR A GOOD CHUCKER-ABT?"

A Dickens on the Boat-Race

"*It was a wonderful week for parsons.*" Guess where I found that. In the article on "University Boat Race" in CHARLES DICKENS (JUNIOR'S) *Dictionary of the Thames, from Its Source to the Nore—An Unconventional Handbook*, 1892.

The article on the Boat Race is not very unconventional. It is a long and almost passionate complaint about the low and vulgar state into which "the annual eight-oared race" had fallen. (The italics, as they say, are ours.)

"Not many years ago . . . it was a quiet friendly sort of gathering. . . . The comparatively few people who watched the practice of the crews all seemed to know each other. It was a wonderful week for parsons. Past University oarsmen, their jerseys exchanged for the decorous high waistcoat, the white choker taking the place of the rowing-man's muffler, were to be met *all over Putney*, and about Searle's yard and the London boat-house. The towing-path was a sort of Rialto or High 'Change. . . . There were but few rowing-clubs then; the river had not become the fashion; the professional touts and tipsters had not fastened on the boat-race; the graphic reporter as yet was not. There was betting, of course, but it was of a modest kind, and unaccompanied by publicity."

But "of course," sighs the author, "it was all too good to last. The popularising process was not likely to spare the boat-race. First of all aquatics generally grew more in favour, and so a larger public was attracted to take an interest in the battle of the blues." This brought in the horrid newspapers, and especially the "graphic reporter" about whom Mr. CHARLES DICKENS is strangely severe.

". . . the graphic reporter worked his will with the race and its surroundings, and the extraordinary multiplication of sporting newspapers and sporting articles in papers of all sorts let loose any number of *touts* on to the towing-path."

Finally, the black snake, Betting, reared its head in verdant Putney. ". . . the ominous announcement, 'Boat-race, 5 to 4 on Oxford (taken in hundreds),' and the like began to appear in the price current of Tattersall's; *and the whole character of the race was changed*. What the blue fever is now, and has been for some years, every Londoner knows well."

Well, I have lived at Hammersmith for twenty-one years, but I have seen nothing of the horrors next described:

"All sorts of dodges, borrowed from some of the shabbiest tricks of the 'horse-watcher's' trade, are adopted" —(*i.e.*, during practice)—"by touts, amateur and professional, to get at the time of the crews between certain points or over the whole course. The race is betted upon as regularly as the Derby, as publicly and as generally. Cabmen, butcher-boys and omnibus-drivers sport the colours of the Universities in all directions: the dark blue of Oxford and the light blue of Cambridge fill all the hosiers' shops, and are flaunted *in all sorts of indescribable company*. Every publican who has a flagstaff hoists a flag to mark his preference and to show which way his crown or so has gone—unless, as is sometimes the case, he be a dispassionate person with no pecuniary interest involved, in which case he impartially displays the banners of both crews."

Shocking. But we have improved since 1892. I know no publican (alas!) who descends to the levity of banners, "dispassionately" or not.

And so the March of Progress continues.

Already in 1892 the number of steamers following the race had been limited to four; and thus a big spectacle was lost. For, as Mr. DICKENS says, "The charge through the bridges of the *twenty* steamers which used to be chartered to accompany the race was something to see"—(I bet it was—the four of to-day are no small show)—"but although it was magnificent it was not safe, and it was fortunate that the Conservancy regulations stopped it before some terrible accident occurred. That nothing very serious ever happened in that fleet of overcrowded, swaying, bumping, jostling boats was an annual cause for wonder; and it became sometimes, when one was on board one of the fleet as it approached Hammersmith, matter for rather serious consideration to speculate at what particular moment the mass of spectators on the suspension-bridge would break it down and plunge with the ruins into the river. Fortunately the bridge stood long enough for the official mind to be exercised on the subject before anything happened, and it is now wisely closed during and for some time before and after the race."

But it was the "*gushing reporter*" who annoyed Mr. DICKENS even more than the tout, the bannered publican or the general betting.



". . . AND FLINGING ME OVER HIS SHOULDER HE SPED LIGHTLY DOWN THE MOUNTAINSIDE."

"The gushing reporter not only attends the race itself, but disports himself on the towing-path after his peculiar and diverting fashion on practice days, and daily develops the strangest conglomeration of views on matters aquatic in the greatest possible number of words."

And even the general public do not escape the general censure:—

"For some time before the race there is taken in it—or affected to be taken, which does just as well—an interest which has about it even something ludicrous. Every scrap of gossip about the men and their boats, their trials and their coaches, is greedily devoured. Year by year, to gratify the public taste in that direction, has the language of the industrious gentlemen who describe the practice become more and more candid, not to say personal."—(But why not say it?)—"The faults and peculiarities of individual members of the crews are criticised in some quarters in terms which might be considered rude if applied to a favourite for the Derby, who presumably does not read the sporting papers, and which when used in speaking of gentlemen who may perhaps have feelings to be hurt, seem to the unprejudiced mind even offensive."

Here, I feel, the March of Progress is pretty stationary. Only this morning in *The Times*—a long and learned diagnosis of the Oxford crew's condition—I read the strangest remarks about the "peculiarities of individual members . . . who may perhaps have feelings to be hurt."

"The difference between Sturrock coming off his stretcher and Burroughs coming off his is the difference between the bounce of a fast and a slow squash rackets ball. . . ."

One young gentleman "rows little more than two-thirds of a stroke"; another "lets a spirited beginning die away into a weak finish, so that the water runs back over his blade." And of *stroke* it is written that "the chances are just, but only just, in favour of his learning by March 24 to mark the beginning and retain his rhythm and to cease to waste all the time that he does in curtsying to his oar at the finish."

"Curtsying to his oar"! Really, really! What would C. DICKENS have thought of that?

The author attributed most of the evils of which he complained to the Metropolitan surroundings of the race. "The fact is, and becomes more and more plain every year, that the boat-race is becoming vulgarised—not in the sense that it is patronised and in favour with what are called 'common people,' but in the sense that it has got to be the centre of most undesirable surroundings—and that its removal from metropolitan waters would not be lamented by real friends of the Universities, or lovers of genuine sport. . . ."

And then comes this somewhat saddening forecast: "It is probable, before very long, that it will occur to the authorities that there are other suitable pieces of water in England besides the Putney course, and that there is no reason whatever why, if the annual *vexata quaestio* of the rowing superiority of the rival Universities is all that is to be taken into account, the race should not be rowed elsewhere."

"Saddening," I said; for it shows how little the most earnest scribe may be attended to. Forty-five years have gone by. And I am told that a fortnight from to-day, on March 24, at about noon, it is proposed to hold an eight-oared boat-race between the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge—and on the Putney course. The senior University, they tell me, will win this time, and, *pace* CHARLES DICKENS, there is no real reason why the parsons should not have a wonderful week—yes, "all over Putney."

A. P. H.



"WELL, NO, I DON'T EXACTLY DO THE COMMENTARY; I GIVE THE NUMBERS OF THE SQUARES."

From the Ish Anthology

THERE is, let me tell you, a considerable Ish literature of which I merely scratched the surface in the recent series of translations which I ended with the very nearly round figure C. Now nobody else is in a position to give this to the English-speaking world, because I, as I have said before, invented the Ish language and am therefore uniquely fitted to translate it. (This gives me a kind of indispensable feeling which is very pleasant in the sort of weather we have been having lately.) For the benefit, therefore, of those members of the English-speaking world who have kindly intimated their approval of my Ish translations (staggering as this may seem to those members of it who haven't), I propose to give the English-speaking world some more. These are selected—and when I say selected I mean chosen, just as you do when you do—from that miscellany of literature ranging from the epic to the placard known (to me) as the Ish Anthology.

I do not propose to number this lot in Roman figures. I have run the gamut of Roman figures once from I. to C. and that's enough. Count this lot for yourself.

SONG TO BE SUNG IN THE BATH

Ah! (*p*) Ah! (*pp*) Ah! Beneath
The bathroom door,
That it may not be checked
By the stiff edge of the worn linoleum,
Lies spread (*ff*) like a mat

The record of attendances at meetings
Of all the members
Of (*rallentando*) the hospital management committee.

THE LAST WORD

From the opposite corner
Of the railway-carriage
Was displayed to me this great truth
On the front page of a periodical:

"WHAT THE SOUL IS

A Substantial Entity, Synonymous
With the Spiritual Body."

Well, I thought,
It's nice to know.

AN ADJECTIVE

How all too often
Is a film not strong enough
To support
The supporting programme!

LET THEM BE SURE

"You can always make 'em clap,"
Said the restaurant band-leader,
"If you show 'em it's the end,
Good and proper.
When they don't clap
It means they didn't notice."

TABLEAU AT A PUBLIC LUNCHEON

The letters regretting
Their inability to attend,
From the PRIME MINISTER,
The Archbishop of CANTERBURY,
The President of the French Republic,
Sir JOHN REITH,
The Japanese Ambassador and
Mr. ADOLPH ZUKOR,
Sounded exceedingly odd.

We all looked hard at the Honorary Secretary,
Who had read them.

He looked back at us
With an expression of defiance.

NOTE ON AN ARCHITECT'S DESIGN

This is the sort of place
No gentleman's library
Should be within.

THE TAILOR: A FABLE

He bred clothes-moths,
The eggs of which
He scattered inside his suits
Before he sewed the linings.

Moral: The lifeblood of commerce
Is the customer who comes again.

THE MAN IN THE STREET

In which street?
Park
Or Petticoat
Lane?

THE TARGETS

Sad
That the two human qualities
To which a needy hospital
Will find it pays best to appeal
Are . . .

Well, work it out for yourself
From the foolproof formula:

"Help the dear brave little kiddies
(All of course blue-eyed;
All, we need hardly say, blonde),
In the august company
Of Lord X."

ENIGMATICAL DUOLOGUE

"What does E.P.N.S. mean,
Professor?"

The Professor replied: "Electro Plate
On Nickel Silver."

"Yes, but I mean the letters
After your name?"

"That's what it means there too."
"B-b-but how——?"

"I often wonder,"
The Professor said meditatively,
"Myself."

R. M.



"NONE O' THAT MUSIC-'ALL STUFF FOR ME, MRS. BROWN. I PREFERS TO LISTEN TO THAT REGINALD WHAT'S-'IS-NAME A-BENDING OF CHOPPING'S PIECES ON THE ORGAN."

A Portrait

Seen in the Press

SOME fear rough seas and some
Grow queasy at a drug;
And so was I o'ercome
By that atrocious mug.

The skull was low of shape,
And down below one saw
Great dewlaps of an ape
Encompassing the jaw.

One scarce discerned a chin;
The lips were gross and fat,
The eyes, half-shuttered, thin
As in a furtive cat.

There, to one's awe-struck gaze,
A carefree treachery lurked,
There the engaging traits
Of craft and cunning smirked.

One felt that here was one
Who 'd catch a female child
And wring its neck for fun;
And that would be too mild;

To whom, whate'er he lacked,
All evil came unsought,
Who did no decent act
And thought no decent thought.

Such was the pictured face
That paper bade me scan,
This credit to the race,
This masterpiece of Man.

P.S.

Now that I look anew
That portrait seems unfair;
To everyone his due;
The man's a millionaire. DUM-DUM.

How to Talk to an Author

THE important thing to remember when addressing an author (a contingency for which you should always be ready, for it has been happily observed that it takes all sorts to make a world) is always to make recognition of his profession. This is a concession peculiar to authors. You may meet a grocer without asking his opinion on the relative virtues of white and brown sugar; you may meet a doctor and abstain from discussing the latest gossip hot from Harley Street about appendices, but when you meet an author it is absolutely essential to give your conversation a literary twist.

It is easy to tell an author, because your hostess enlightens you at once. She says, "Oh, this is Mr. Scribblington Penn," adding, either informatively or extenuatingly, "Mr. Penn writes, you know."

To this you remark, "Oh, really!" in a tone of bright and pleased interest conveying, if you can manage it, that you have of course read widely in your time, but it had never occurred to you that what you read emanated from people like Mr. Scribblington Penn. Your hostess having left you, your duologue with Mr. Penn should be something like this:—

You. So you write?

Mr. S. P. (*with deprecating laugh*). Well, I—I try to, you know.

You. I've always thought it must be a most interesting life. What name do you write under?

Mr. S. P. Well, as a matter of fact I write under my own name.

You. Fancy! I must keep a look-out. Tell me now—just when do you write? When the mood takes you? I suppose you often go months without putting pen to paper, don't you? And don't you find it most awfully difficult to get ideas?

Mr. S. P. Yes.

You. But I suppose it comes quite easily to people who have the gift. Look at writers like GILBERT FRANKAU and P. G. WODEHOUSE, I mean. You see their work everywhere. You know, it's *interesting* meeting an author. (*Archly*) I must be careful what I say to you or you'll be putting me in one of your books.

[Mr. S. P. *laughs politely.*

You (*pursuing the whimsical conceit*). Yes, I must keep a watch on my tongue! I don't want to pick up a book in a week or two and find it's all about me. I expect you're remembering everything I say!

Mr. S. P. Well, as a matter of fact I——

You. I've often thought if I cared to sit down I could write a book—just about things that have happened to me—that would surprise people. *I* could give you some ideas.

Mr. S. P. You do.

You. Well, I mustn't monopolise you, must I? I expect you're trying to think out the plot for your next story, aren't you? It's been quite interesting, hearing how an author really works. *Good*-bye!

[Mr. S. P.'s *reply is inaudible.*

On your second meeting you must show by further allusion to his calling that Mr. Scribblington Penn is firmly docketed in your memory. Several remarks offer themselves, of which three are:—

"Well, Mr. Penn, have you written that story about me yet?"

"Oh, Mr. Penn, I read one of your little tales the other day. At least, I think it was by you. (*With mild surprise*) It was quite good."

"Oh, how do you do, Mr. Penn? And tell me—are you still writing?"

At your third meeting you will be sufficiently intimate to go into the fiscal side of writing. Do not beat about the bush. Ask straight out—

"Do tell me, Mr. Penn, I've often wondered: How much do they pay you for your little things?"

If Mr. Penn tells you, don't give yourself away by exhibiting surprise. The most you may allow yourself is a long whistle to hint that some money is easily earned. You should then, to show that you are in the know, say: "But of course a lot of writers get more than that, don't they? Oh, I mean *established* authors, of course. My sister was at a party once, and she met a woman who knew ETHEL M. DELL." (Long anecdote about Miss DELL to demonstrate your cognizance with things literary.) "Still, we can't all be ETHEL M. DELLS, can we?"

It should not be necessary to take you beyond the third meeting. For one thing, you now know one another well enough to get along together without my help. And for another, if Mr. Scribblington Penn possesses one-tenth of the agility and resource commonly found in gentlemen connected with literature there will never be a fourth meeting.



"EDWARD, NOW THAT FREDDY HAS BEEN PSYCHO-ANALYSED DON'T YOU THINK IT WOULD BE SAFE TO STOP HIM SAWING UP THE FURNITURE?"

A Warning to Rhubarb Consumers

THOUGH the British housewife is generally speaking adequately rhubarb conscious, it is to be feared that she is extremely ignorant concerning the natural history of the plant. Let us hope that the lately established Rhubarb Marketing Board will take steps for her enlightenment so that she may buy with more discrimination. If the nation is to be fit, its food must be palatable and the family protected against inferior and even dangerous comestibles.

Amongst these must be included what experts know as Forest or Tree Rhubarb, quantities of which are dumped on the British market every

year. As the result of widely-extended inquiries I find that even well-informed persons in this country suppose that the domestic rhubarb (*Rheubarbarum*) is the only variety sold for consumption. They are not even aware of the existence of rhubarb as a tree (*Rheubarbarum gigas*).

To one who has passed several years amongst the rhubarb forests of the Upper Amazon this is, to say the least, astonishing. It is of course this ignorance which makes the British housewife the easy dupe of unscrupulous importers who pass off the smaller branches and twigs of *Rheubarbarum gigas* as ordinary garden rhubarb. Quantities of this foreign wood reach the British table, and it is of course responsible for a good deal of prejudice against anything bearing the name of rhubarb.

No matter through what culinary processes it passes, stalks from the rhubarb tree remain hard and stringy in consistency, harsh and sour in taste. Unfortunately, owing to the curious growth of this forest giant, its diminutive branches are, to the inexpert eye, scarcely distinguishable from the slim and tender stalk of the related garden plant. To the palate, teeth and digestion, however, there is little resemblance, and the horror of the rhubarb season to which many persons confess is of course the result of unfortunate experiences with this almost inedible growth.

For many purposes the rhubarb tree is extremely useful. While the main trunk is somewhat too pliant to provide good timber, the lengthy fibres, extracted and dried, make an excellent substitute for hempen cables; the immense leaves provide the natives with roofs for the shelters or *tambus* which they inhabit during the rainy season, while the juice, extracted by compression, is a powerful acid or, diluted, a serviceable tanning agent.

As happens in so many cases, the tribes which inhabit the rhubarb country have learned how to misuse what nature meant for a blessing. Boiling this potent fluid, they drink it, with disastrous results, being driven by the resultant internal agony into a state of homicidal melancholia. Out there the rhubarb addict is only too easily identified by his saw-edged teeth and the repulsive warping of his features.

When the trees are felled the natives normally make use of the smaller branches and shoots for the building of fences or palisades around their villages. For the latter purpose they are especially valuable, as it has been found that no wild animal, however hungry, will use its teeth upon the wiry acrid stems. Unscrupulous traders, profiting by the ignorance of the British people, have for many years diverted quantities of this by-product of the rhubarb tree from its legitimate uses and exported it at an enormous profit.



"MUM, WHEN I GROW UP I SHOULDN'T AT ALL MIND BEING ONE OF THOSE 'AWFULLY DECENT' CROOKS."

The methods by which it is introduced into our fruiterers' shops are extremely ingenious, and it will not be easy to unravel the intricacies of this sinister traffic. The Rhubarb Marketing Board will have to exert great courage and ingenuity, for there is no doubt that vested interests, powerful as unscrupulous, are involved.

Every British housewife can do her part by bringing to bear upon her shopping the knowledge I have endeavoured to supply. I have at least put her on her guard. The edible rhubarb-stalk is pleasant to the eye and to the touch and is not reinforced by natural twine as are the branches of the forest species.

If you find it almost impossible to cut the stalks supplied by your fruiterer and extremely difficult to separate the softer portions from the fibre by boiling, report the matter at once to the Rhubarb Marketing Board; and above all do not stoop to the bitter jest of putting the stuff before your family as a sweet.

W. K. H.

Design for Caning

Twyford School,
Cheshire.
March 14th, 1937.

DEAR MR. CLUTTERBUCK,—I am sorry to have to inform you that your son Brian has become extremely unruly this term. On Friday the Headmaster had occasion to thrash him on account of repeated complaints from his form-master, and this afternoon I myself had to cane him severely for breaking House Rules consistently. I am given to understand that the Head of the House has also caned him on three occasions after Prep.

It is not our custom to trouble parents with matters of School or House discipline, but your son has recently adopted a rebellious and stubborn attitude to regulations and authority, and I feel that perhaps a severe letter from you might shake him out of this unfortunate frame of mind which threatens to spoil if not to terminate his school career.

There is nothing vicious about the boy; it is merely a—may I say?—Irish independence of spirit, a cavalier treatment of life which is liable to spread among the small boys of whom he is the leader. It is perhaps only a passing phase, but unless he is brought to a more reasonable frame of mind soon desperate measures will have to be taken. Last year he was docile enough, although his work left much to be desired—doubtless because he was new to the school.

He shows a promising enthusiasm for Rugby football and has the makings of a brilliant scrum-half, although his play is somewhat reckless and desperate. He also seems to have possibilities as a cox and might even steer the Eight next year at Henley. His boxing is splendid. But he shows an unfortunate scorn of Athletics and has cut House runs four times this month.

His work is decidedly poor this term and he has dropped three places, to bottom of the form, in the first month's orders. But the real trouble is his delight in breaking rules, his insubordinate attitude to monitorial authority, and his reckless escapades in breaking school bounds, in fraternising with the kitchen staff and bribing the cook for illicit food, and his general lack of proper respect for Law and Order.

I expect he will tell you of the trouble he has been in this week; in fact I told him to report this afternoon's caning to you in his letter home to-night. If you will write to him in the strongest possible vein I shall be grateful. The boy has the makings of a splendid type, but only if he can be speedily brought to a more reasonable frame of mind.

With kindest regards to Mrs. Clutterbuck and yourself,

Sincerely yours,
MARTIN CHOWTON.

Twyford School,
Cheshire.
March 14th, 1937.

DEAR DADDY,—There is no news, but I am well and I hope you are well and Pixie and her pups and Mummy. It rained here yesterday. I suppose you couldn't get me off for the Rugger International? Its rotton the way they won't let us off for the England-Scotland game. I expect you are going to Edinborough.

It rained yesterday. Tell Mummy I'm sorry I'm writing to you and not to her, but old Chow told me too. He's hairy with me, but it's just his mood. There's no news. I'm still coxing the House Boat but I have to run every afternoon. It rained here yesterday. I must stop now because there's no news. Love from

BRIAN.

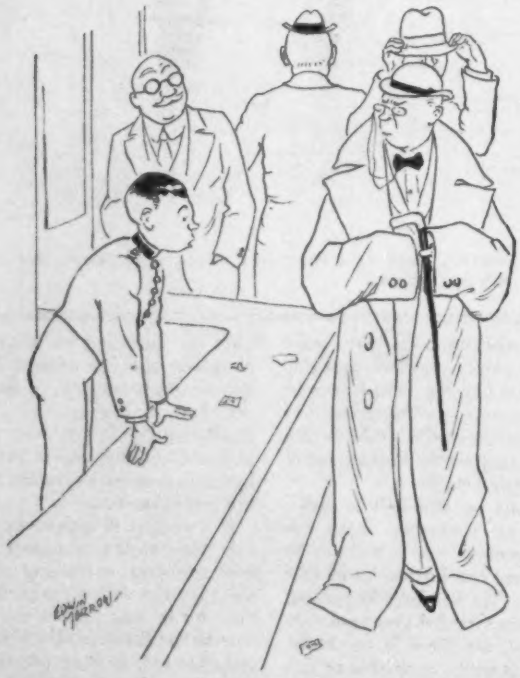
The Manor,
Aldrington,
Worcestershire.
March 16th, 1937.

DEAR MR. CHOWTON,—I read your letter with considerable surprise. I know my boy well enough to be convinced that your fears for his future are quite groundless and I resent most strongly your reference to the Irish blood in his veins, which accounts for his natural resentment to pettifogging scholastic regulations. I am delighted that the boy has spirit and guts, qualities which were appreciated in juniors in my days at the School. I would remind you that I was at the School and in your House before you had left your Preparatory School, wherever that was.

That the boy's rugger is sound and spirited and that he has won his weight in the boxing competitions proves to me that your anxieties are unfounded. In my days such qualities counterbalanced mere form orders and minor delinquencies.

However, since you have asked me, I have written to the boy; but I repeat that I resent your implications. The seventeen rugger Internationals and the seven rowing Blues which the School produced during my generation were the result of an appreciation of guts in juniors.

Brian's uncle — my wife's only brother—sails for Australia on Satur-



"I'M AFRAID YOUR CHECKING SYSTEM HAS BROKEN DOWN."



"Best 'old tight, Ladies. She's a bitter old witch down this yer 'ill."

day next, and I would be grateful if you would give Brian Special Leave for the week-end. I know that this is against the regulations, but as the circumstances are unusual perhaps you will stretch a point. And I hope that you will prove that you can handle a boy of Brian's calibre before I am forced to decide against sending his three brothers to the House.

With kind regards from Mrs. Clutterbuck and myself,

Yours sincerely,
DESMOND O'H. CLUTTERBUCK.

The Manor,
Aldrington,
Worcestershire.

My DEAR BRIAN,—Your Housemaster has written to complain of your repeated conflicts with authority this term, and unless you stop this fooling about and settle down to some decent work and behaviour you'll commence your next holidays with a thrashing which will show you exactly how inefficient the masters at the school are in these days. I'll show you how we dealt with little rotters when I was Head of the House. I don't mind an occasional row, but I'm not going to have a son of mine make an exhibition of himself at school. Your grandfather and I both managed to have decent school careers, and you've damn well got to pull your socks up. I mean what I say, and I have told Mr. Chowton to let me know exactly how you behave for the rest of the term. I'll say no more about this, but it's up to you now, and if you don't make yourself less of a silly young pup you'll be sorry you were born.

I have written to ask for Special Leave for you this week-end, and we'll motor up to Edinburgh early on Saturday morning. I'll pick you up at School directly after breakfast. I mentioned an uncle and Australia. Your mother says you are to bring an overcoat and a raincoat.

Don't be a young ass, my lad.

Love from,
DADDY.

Twyford School,
Cheshire.
18*th March*, 1937.

DEAR MR. CLUTTERBUCK,—I have arranged for Brian to have Special Leave for next week-end, and you can have him directly after breakfast, as he tells me you have to be at Liverpool in time to have lunch on the boat with his uncle, about whom he has some amusing anecdotes. He seems to be very attached to this uncle.

His behaviour has been vastly improved since he received your letter, and perhaps I exaggerated when I wrote on Sunday. I apologise for any unfortunate remarks, and I trust that he will become Head of the House one of these days with at least two of his brothers under his authority.

With kindest regards,

Very sincerely yours,
MARTIN CHOWTON.

Kismet

If I am booked for a death on the road,
If a tarmac fate is mine,
Oh, let me not be squashed like a toad
By a rattling roadster swine;

Let me fall to a duchess's proud Rolls-Royce
With tyres of a portly build,
And hear the tones of a cultured voice
Saying, "James, what is that we've killed?"



"YES, MISS, 'E WERE A GOOD MASTER. SEVENTEEN YEARS I WORKED FOR 'IM AND 'E NEVER SER MUCH AS ONCE ARST ME WOT I WERE AT."

The Britisch Empire

Typical conversations for nordic students of britisch ways and means

IV.—AT THE GOLD-MINING

Hon. Biggs. It is my avowed intention to bring you downwards so that you may remarque, milords, by which manner of means the Empire gold is plucqued from its reposals.

Lord Smith. That will be enticing.

Viscount Brown. We shall be richer for the experience.

Lord Robinson. I hope so. Ho, ho! it is my resolve to go with empty pockets and reap some souvenirs on the sli. Let us begin.

Lord Smith. Really! What a thing to say aloud! What opinions should the kolonials have of us in such a case?

Hon. Biggs. Come! Let us go on the assumption that he had no intention of meaning what he said.

Viscount Brown. How do we enter the hole?

Hon. Biggs. In yonder lift.

Lord Robinson. Can it be trusted? It has every outward semblance of promising to be very wrickety-wrackety.

[*They enter.*

Lord Robinson. Gracious! There! I said so! We are falling to our dooms. Ei!

Hon. Biggs. Ho, Ho! We do but descend. It is the deliberate action of those in the upstairs machinery. See, we are a-stopping. Come out now.

Viscount Brown. This place is full of aboriginals. I suppose they live here.

Hon. Biggs. They are the workmen who grapple with the rocks.

Lord Robinson. Only think! We are beneath the Empire, a long way. Very well, then, where is the gold? I do not notice it.

Hon. Biggs. It is not on view, for the reason that it is in the rocks and stones embedded.

Lord Robinson. Well, I am a-skraping and a-skratching with my personal knife, yet there is no glint.

Lord Smith. It must be concealed very snugly.

Viscount Brown. I suppose you are not huoaxing us! Can what you have said be make-believe?

Hon. Biggs. What ideas! Kindly be politer. Later I will show you the process of withdrawing the precious metall.

[*They grope about beneath inside and then ascend again.*

Lord Smith. Well, that was o! so interesting, but of course such a place is not what I have been accustomed to.

Viscount Brown. I must say it was not built for comfort.

Lord Robinson. Still, it is a remarkable cavity. Now let us have a look at what happens next, and at last, I hope, we shall view the good gold.

Hon. Biggs. This way, please.



MAD MARCH

[The Fascist Grand Council has decided to increase the armed forces of Italy, and declared that any possibility of a limitation of arms is henceforth to be excluded.]

Impressions of Parliament

Synopsis of the Week

***Monday, March 1st.*—Commons : Defence Loans Bill taken in Committee.**



THE ONLY WAY

LORD CECIL OF CHELWOOD FORBEARS TO FOLLOW IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF HIS FOREBEARS.

***Tuesday, March 2nd.*—Lords : Debate on Foreign Affairs.**

Commons : Debate on Foreign Affairs.

***Wednesday, March 3rd.*—Lords : Debate on Foreign Affairs concluded.**

Commons : Unemployment Fund Surplus discussed.

Monday, March 1st.—Some of the B.B.C.'s scripts are still red rags to John Bulls. Suspicions of Bolshevist intrigue die very hard on the back benches, and to-day Sir ALFRED KNOX asked whether there was any practical difficulty in the way of supplying the Library with daily verbatim reports of broadcasts. Yes, answered Major TRYON, for more than 400,000 words or 1,300 pages of foolscap were broadcast weekly; and as this is rather in excess of a modern best-selling novel the difficulty appeared practical enough. The only simple course open to members of the Comintern-Hunt, it seems, would be to organise a chain of wary listeners in a secluded corner of the Carlton Club.

Mr. PETHICK-LAWRENCE'S motion to reduce the amount up to which the CHANCELLOR could borrow from £400 million to £200 million was supported by the argument that this was the maximum figure which genuine capital expenditure could reach during the next five years. Mr. CHAMBERLAIN replied that arrears had to be made up which extended over a very long time, and that he had satisfied himself that a loan of the full amount would create neither difficulty in the capital market nor undue inflation.

Tuesday, March 2nd.—Both Houses enjoyed excellent debates to-day on Foreign Affairs, the greatest variations of opinion being found in the Lords.

In the course of a highly individual speech Lord LOTHIAN denied the possibility of Collective Security in a world of Sovereign States, and explained that he did not reject the League but the form of military alliance which it was beginning to take. The fear of Germany was to a large extent a bogey. Pacifism he condemned as incapable of maintaining the government on which peace must be based, and he urged that we should withdraw from Europe and enter into more intimate association with the United States.

Lord PONSONBY, deploring both his own Party's approval of Collective Security and what he described as the



LORD SNELL. "NO, MONASTIC LIFE WOULDN'T HAVE SUITED ME—AT ANY RATE NOT IN THIS PARTICULAR ORDER."

[In the Debate on Foreign Policy Lord SNELL expressed his disapproval of the monastic system for individuals as well as for nations.]

"war-complex" which the Government was creating amongst the public, put the pure Pacifist case. He was followed by Lord CECIL, who felt that he was bound to support rearmament, coupled with international co-operation. For the future he considered that the only hope was to aim at the federalisation of Europe. Much of the same mind was Lord CREWE.

In a speech which was doubly impressive for its freedom from the bitterness

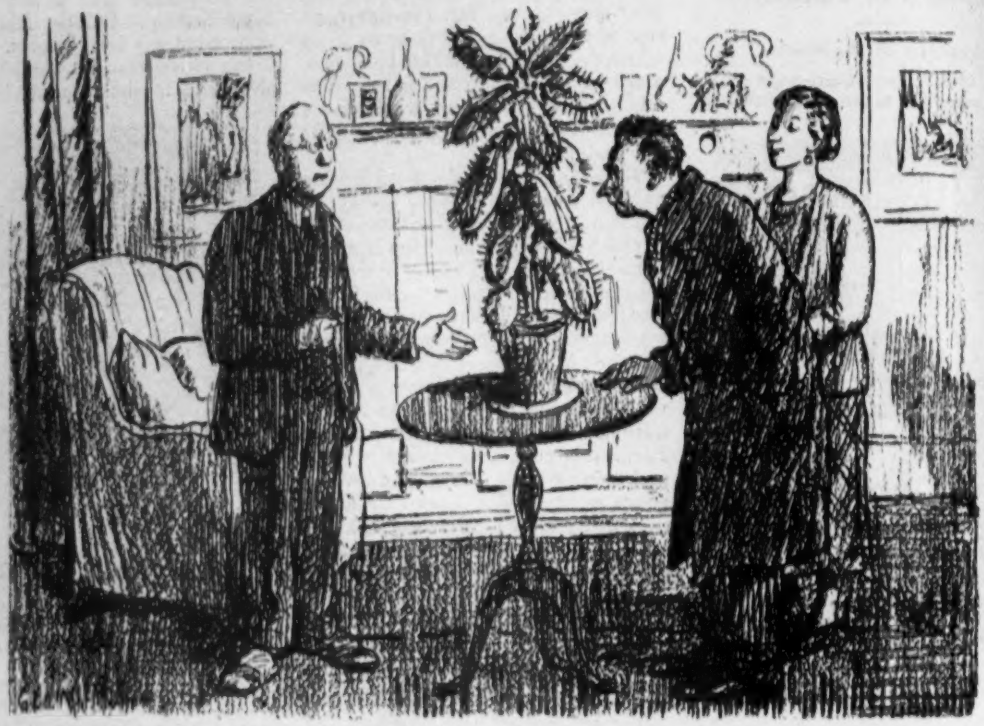


Mrs. Gamp. "SOME PEOPLE MAY BE ROOSHANS, AND OTHERS MAY BE PROOSHANS; THEY ARE BORN SO, AND WILL PLEASE THEMSELVES. THEM WHICH IS OF OTHER NATURS THINKS DIFFERENT."
Martin Chuzzlewit

["If I were living under the Nazi *régime* in Germany I should be in a concentration camp as a Pacifist and Socialist; if I were living under the Soviet *regime* I should have been shot long ago."—*Lord* PONSONBY.]

which so often mars the leading utterances of the Opposition, Mr. GRENFELL pointed out the increasing dangers of international propaganda and of Europe's crazy expenditure on armaments, of which this year he calculated that Germany and Russia would be responsible for two-thirds. Germany's neighbours were apprehensive. In return for a Colonial bargain would she give guarantees? And would the Government take the right step and call together a world peace convention?

Mr. EDEN came next with an extremely effective speech, in which he told the House that the only alternative to our present policy in Spain was the impossible course of intervention, that, while the failures of the League in Manchukuo and Abyssinia dominated the public mind, it was usually forgotten that no fewer than ten disputes had been settled at Geneva since 1931, and that the Government's view about Germany's claim to colonies was still summed up in Lord CRANBORNE'S answer that



"A BEAUTY, ISN'T IT? MY WIFE AND I BOTH FEEL WE CAN NEVER REGAIN OUR ENTHUSIASM FOR ASPIDISTRAS."

such a transfer had not been considered and was not being considered. As for reform of the League, convalescence was not a suitable time for a major operation; the Government backed the Covenant, but was not in a position to support automatic military commitments. And the rearmament programme had been welcomed by countries politically as divergent as France and Hungary.

Germany's refusal to participate in the League's raw materials Committee was criticised by Sir AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, who thought Europe had less need of conferences than of adherence to agreements already made; Mr. GALLACHER performed his oratorical breast-stroke to the delight of the whole House; Sir ARCHIBALD SINCLAIR asked for a reign of law; and Mr. NOEL BAKER and Lord CRANBORNE wound up on sound party lines.

Wednesday, March 3rd.—Referring to a book recently written by an ex-convict named MACARTNEY under the title *Walls Have Mouths*, Lord KINNOULL drew attention to a number of accusations against the prison system, which, if true, called for investigation. Lord DUFFERIN replied that Mr. MACARTNEY'S criticisms were quite out-of-date and that some of them were in any case contradictory, and described what sounded about as pleasant a régime as could be arranged while retaining the necessary element of discouragement.



OUR BACK-BENCH *WHO'S WHO*

Here you see
The Tail-waggers' M.P.,
Sir ROBERT GOWER, whose end
Is to be our dumb chums' friend.

The conclusion of the Foreign Affairs debate in the Lords brought a significant speech from Lord ALLEN, who said he felt compelled in the name of peace to support the rearmament proposals, although he regretted that the League was so often discussed as an instrument of force and so seldom as one of justice. Lord RANKEILLOUR was for retaining our understanding with France and at the same time coming to any possible agreement with Germany. Backing rearmament for pacific purposes, Lord SNELL, who has a pretty wit, confessed that the monastic life appeared no better to him for a nation than for an individual, and sympathised with Lord ARNOLD for being hailed as a prophet by Lord BEAVERBROOK, whose painful embrace he felt certain Lord ARNOLD hardly deserved. In reply Lord HALIFAX added little to the clear definitions of Mr. EDEN.

The Commons struck a dullish patch on the technicalities of Unemployment Insurance, but at Question-time Mr. HORE-BELISHA announced that the Government had decided to accept in principle the recommendations of the McGOWAN Committee for the reorganisation of electrical supply.

The Ski Pilots

"Hi!" cried Ferdinand from further up the snow-slope. "Why don't you get up?"

"Mainly because I am unable to regain the erect position," I answered with dignity.

The problem resembled one of those wire-puzzle things. My left ski was a permanent fixture under my right leg and both bâtons were inextricably mixed up with the right ski and my own person. I struggled once more, succeeded in hitting my head with one my boots—I could not tell which—and gave it up.

Chamonix lay dazzling white below. In the distance I saw Lorna edging cautiously downwards, her ski turned inwards at an obtuse angle. A gigantic Norwegian shot past her at speed and she fell over. I lay back on the snow in the warm sunshine and stared at the Aiguilles, clear and cold against the blue. There is no pleasanter sport than ski.

"Come up here, you slacker!" yelled Ferdinand, who had had a lesson from an expert the day before.

"You come down here," I retorted. "It's softer."

"Dashed if I will!" shrieked my brother-in-law. "All right!" he amended hastily as his ski began to slide.

"See that?" he inquired a moment later, crawling out of a heap of snow at my side. "I did a 'Christiania'!"

"You mean an 'Oslo,' I suppose," I said. "Have a cigarette?"

Ferdinand waved it aside. "Don't waste all morning lazing about," he said severely. "Come and ski. Get up."

"After you," I said.

Ferdinand gave a convulsive movement and fell over on his other side.

"It's easy enough if you get your ski straight first," he grunted. He made another effort and locked one of his ski round my right foot.

"Of course if there are bodies lying about . . ." he grumbled, and gave a terrific heave. We began to move downward, locked in a close embrace.

"Take your boot out of my mouth," cried Ferdinand in a muffled voice.

"It's not mine. Must be yours," I replied, trying desperately to arrest our progress.

We gathered speed. Figures in brightly-coloured clothing shot past us. There was a scream from in front and we collided heavily with something. It was my wife.

"You brutes!" she said, sitting up with difficulty. "I'd just managed to get on my feet."

"How?" I inquired earnestly.

"I forget," said Lorna. "Oh, *do* look at Ferdinand!"

My brother-in-law had regained his feet. He crowed triumphantly.

"There you are!" he cried. "Just a matter of getting the ski straight first."

He began to climb up the snow-slope and paused some yards away to wave his bâton derisively.

A moment later he had rejoined the family circle in a smother of snow.

"A 'Christiania'?" I inquired, passing him a cigarette. He took it in silence.

We lay back on the snow in the warm sunshine and stared at the Aiguilles.

A tiny child not more than a foot high shot past us like a swallow, singing.

There is no pleasanter sport than ski.



"AN' WOT'S MORE, YOU'RE A ONE-EYED, LOP-EARED, DOUBLE-FICED CAT—AND I 'OPE SOME D'Y SOMEONE LETS YER KNOW IT."

At the Play

"THE ASCENT OF F.6" (MERCURY)

SOME of the most interesting of the new plays which experiment and seek to release the play from its straight-jacket of conventional form are to be seen these days at the little Mercury Theatre at Notting Hill Gate. *The Ascent of F.6*, the joint work of two young men of letters, W. H. AUDEN and CHRISTOPHER ISHERWOOD, has a very ambitious theme and flings a wide net. It is concerned with exceptional achievement under modern conditions, and it seeks to find the human causes which make individuals want to achieve these great feats. There is a lot of good cartooning fun, attractive burlesques, which contain much shrewd satire on the motives that lead modern governments to promote prestige expeditions and newspaper magnates to blend patriotism with profit. Like the Greek Chorus, a B.B.C. announcer punctuates the evening with his fatuities, and although the Mercury stage is small, it is made to sub-divide, so that after seeing the broadcasting studio in one corner of the stage we see a typical listener's home in the other.

What is broadcast is a British attempt on a hitherto unclimbed Asiatic mountain; but *F.6* is a symbol for all kinds of arduous and heroic effort which lends itself to immediate publicity. The limitations of that publicity are made very plain. In the suburban home we see how little and how rapidly diminishing is the real interest aroused.

The dramatists are rather inclined to go after every butterfly they see. *Mr.* and *Mrs. A* hold long colloquies with the audience and each other on the narrowness of their lives, and although the discussions are well done and the points subtly made, the whole issue thus raised proves rather too large for a sub-plot or undercurrent.

In the main plot we are given plenty to think about. *Michael Forsyth Ransom* (Mr. WILLIAM DEVLIN) is the chief climber of his generation, but he not only hates the public accompaniments of spectacular feats so that he dreads the descent from *F.6* into the world of newspaper luncheons, but he is also tormented with doubts about his motives in seeking the bright face of danger at all. His companions, *David Gunn* (Mr. BARRY BARNES) and *Ian Shawcross* (Mr. NORMAN CLARIDGE), together with a botanist (Mr. PETER ASHMORE) and a large and comfortable doctor (Mr. PHILIP THORNLEY), have fewer dark places in their souls, though both *David* and *Ian* have some.



A FRIENDLY WARNING

The Abbot . . . . . MR. EVAN JOHN
Michael Forsyth Ransom . MR. WILLIAM DEVLIN

In the unfolding of the perils of the mountain and the reactions of the party to them, the influence of *Journey's End* seems traceable, and the play passes from scenes influenced by DAVID LOW, with cheerful caricatures like *General Dellaby-Couch* (Mr. ERIK CHITTY), through the tension and the revelation of character which come in moments of crisis, to the higher imaginative flights, as in the speeches of the *Buddhist Abbot* (Mr. EVAN JOHN); and the final echo when the dreaded fiend on the mountain-summit drops her mask recalls G. K. CHESTERTON'S *Man Who Was Thursday*.

Mr. DEVLIN is an actor who excels in strong action, and he does not get much scope, unless one considers the representation of desperate mountaineering to count as active. He has to do a great deal of introspection of the silent sort, and the dramatists, who make many of the lesser characters completely articulate, leave to the actor the great difficulties of making *Ransom*, scarred by a difficult childhood, intelligible.

Much of the success of a highly stimulating evening comes from the immediate character of the images presented in the verse. Poetry is not allowed to live in a world of its own; with its own vocabulary and ideas it keeps close to everyday life, even when its diction is Shakespearean. There is in consequence a satisfying sense of relevance that here is a play about what is actual and real, and the minor characters can be caricatures because that is the way to convey the quintessence of what they represent.

D. W.



INFORMAL BROADCAST

Lord Stagmantle . . . . . MR. EDWARD LEXY
An Announcer . . . . . MR. STUART LATHAM
David Gunn . . . . . MR. BARRY BARNES

"RETREAT FROM FOLLY" (QUEEN'S)

This is the story of a woman who, having been unjustly divorced by her first husband twenty years earlier, returns to London widowed by the death of a second to find her two lost children so far advanced on the paths of crime and scandal that she is not only driven to resolute lying for their sake but even to remarrying their father as a precautionary measure. There is not much to be learned during

the play about any of its characters, whose emotions are rather too neatly cut to pattern and gummed together, but it seemed to me that the retreat was conducted not according to the known rules of strategy and that "folly" was too strong a word to apply to the proud acceptance of a merciful escape from marriage with so phenomenally obtuse a man as *Maurice* (Mr. W. GRAHAM-BROWNE).

To say that the play is constructionally a good vehicle for Miss MARIE TEMPEST, in that *Flora* is made to dominate every situation, would be true if it were not that this emphasis on the one part is made at too great a cost to the others, and that the crises with which *Flora* has to deal lack depth and reality.

At the time of her arrival in London (the whole action takes place in the sitting-room of her hotel-suite—a good set) the children have rebelled against the unremitting stupidity of their father and have retired to a small flat. In spite of the independence of mind which this would suggest, they have somehow been kept entirely ignorant of their mother's new life. *Elsa* (Miss ANTOINETTE CELLIER) is having an *affaire* with a middle-aged philanderer named *Dumaresque* (Mr. PAUL LEYSSAC) and *Derek* (Mr. PETER COKE) is taking the trunk-road to Dartmoor, through weakness rather than natural depravity, by acting as a well-groomed decoy in the stolen-motor-car business. Their father, vaguely aware that they need expert handling, pays a pompous little call on *Flora* and begs her to get to know them and see what she can do.

Elsa's case is not too difficult, since her lover is not only one of *Flora's* best friends but responsive to a code, though a distorted code, of chivalry; but *Derek's* presents problems which would have proved insoluble if the *Inspector* who is on his trail had not displayed a magnanimity which, as a taxpayer, I hope bears no relation to current police practice. *Flora* lies like a trooper about the stolen car which unwittingly she has bought from *Derek* while he is still in ignorance of her identity, and when the *Inspector*, in spite of having so neglected his elementary duties as to forget to ask for the road-book which should be inseparable from every virtuous motor-car, obtains enough evidence for a charge, he is hypnotised by *Flora's* charm



THE WILY PHILANDERER

Grant Dumaresque . MR. PAUL LEYSSAC
Elsa Burke . . . . MISS ANTOINETTE CELLIER

into a most scandalous confusion between the *rôles* of the judiciary and the executive. In short, he lets the boy off, and this is an unconvincing resolution of the plot. In the last scene, which is the most amusing, *Elsa* objects (with a primness not very characteristic) to her mother coming to stay with the family without remarriage, and to this formality *Flora* agrees.



THAT OLD FOLKS VERY-NEARLY-AT-HOME FEELING

Flora Lowell . . . . . MISS MARIE TEMPEST
Maurice Burke . . . . MR. W. GRAHAM-BROWNE

Miss TEMPEST, though cramped by the part, is given a number of good lines and is her fascinating self; Mr. GRAHAM-BROWNE bravely sacrifices his personality to *Maurice's* futility; Mr. LEYSSAC gives such a good performance that it is a pity he is not further extended; Miss CELLIER operates the eccentric switchboard of *Elsa's* moods with credit, and Mr. COKE is excellent in his filial passages.

Afterwards Miss TEMPEST made a charming little appeal for the actors' ward in St. George's Hospital which bears her name and is in great need of further help. ERIC.

My London Garden

March 1st.—Almost one begins to savour the first-fruits, or rather first-flowers, of one's autumnal labour. Each bowl of bulbs planted last September now has its verdant message. The flower-stems of the hyacinths are revealed. Comparison with unripe cauliflowers in miniature springs to the mind; but how absorbingly interesting it is going to be to watch the sprays gradually assuming that dark red mantle chosen last September from Peabody's catalogue. The daffodils too have grown amazingly. Patience is needed here, though, for no buds show, even when—oh, so carefully!—the sheathing leaves are drawn apart and one peeps within. Like warriors' spears are the pointed leaves of the crocuses, thrusting at no savage enemy indeed, but only towards the sun and air.

Have bought a bowl of mauve tulips in flower from Peabody. Six splendid blooms and only two-and-six. Peabody is really reasonable and obviously not out to make money. The bowl, hexagonal and green with raised ornamental scroll, will be a boon in September when the bulbs for next spring are planted. Mrs. Carruthers (on the ground-floor) has a bowl of tulips planted last September in the sitting-room window; growth very backward compared with Peabody's, but of course buying from Peabody bowls of bulbs in flower is not the same thing as growing one's own, and cannot provide the same interest and pleasure.

Crumpets

BEFORE the crumpet season has drawn to a close I should like to set down one or two experiences. In the West-End the other afternoon, at about half-past four, feeling an appetite for this particular variety of the Food of the Gods, I entered a famous tea-place and ordered some.

"Sorry, but we don't keep crumpets. We have tea-cake, of course."

I passed on to a slightly less famous tea-place, where certainly I was served with crumpets, but they were thin, scaly and almost destitute of butter; thus committing three unpardonable sins, for crumpets should be soft in the middle, should be only lightly toasted and should soak.

So much for London.

On Sunday afternoon I found myself at one of the new roadside hotels converted from a private mansion, where I ordered, from one of the waiters, tea and crumpets; nothing else. In twenty minutes came a large tray which, in addition to one crumpet, bore slices of bread-and-butter, white and brown, several kinds of cake, and a pot of jam.

The crumpet being old and uneatable, I asked for more, quite fresh; but when these came, they were cold, on a cold plate, with a slab of butter that refused to melt, on each.

Finding a manager, I told him of my troubles and suggested that he might as easily get a reputation for thoughtful crumpets as for thoughtless. He agreed, and in course of time came back with, not a crumpet but a muffin, hot, it is true, but cooked to a chip, which he set before me with an expression of triumph that I had not the courage to dash.

And there, I suppose, my adventures with crumpets will end until, next season, I become excited about them again.

I will not become a bore by adding to the usual Jeremiad; but I should much like to meet, face to face, some of those people who are so grossly vocal about the excellence of English cooking. "My country, 'tis of thee," I murmured to myself, "'tis" referring to crumpets generally; for when, in England, a cook ruins an omelette or there is no salad-bowl on the table, we are not surprised, both omelettes and salads being proper to the French; but when a crumpet is treacherously treated we are hurt indeed, for the crumpet is a national affair.

But the crumpet, I have decided, is too delicate to be a subject for general preparation at all. That blend of pliable dough shaped by a GIOTTO of the bakery into a perfect circle—that underside of autumnal brown—that topside, faintly encrusted, in which the holes have been pricked, ready at the appointed moment to receive the butter and ease it on its blessed errand of saturation—even the holes themselves: these constituents deserve and demand an individual attention that no hireling can give, least of all the hirelings in hotel and tea-shop kitchens, who probably talk the while and may even be planning for an evening out. Crumpets require concentration; almost prayer; and next season, since life is so short, they shall get it. I will cook them myself.

Meanwhile, against a better future, something might be done. But I doubt it. The attitude of the public has gone astray. Why, only the other day I was hearing of a village that is still honoured and privileged to possess one of the old muffin-men who make their rounds with a tray on their heads under a green baize cover. Until a short time ago this noble survival drew customers from their homes by ringing a bell: as muffin-men always used to do. But what do you think?—and this is the solemn truth—the noise (amid the permitted or even sanctioned din of the traffic) which his modest traditional tinklings were alleged to make, led to a protest. What are known as representations reached what are known as the right quarters, and the bell was silenced.

Ears that could thus be offended must be disastrously out of sympathy with the past. E. V. L.



"NO, I'M AFRAID ALL OUR ROOMS FACING THE SEA ARE QUITE FULL UP —UNLESS YOU WERE THINKING OF STAYING FOR ANY LENGTH OF TIME."

Equality of the Sexes

"HAVE you ever noticed that men are utterly entirely different?" Laura inquired—quite out of the blue and into the midst of a rather delicate little problem with which I was wrestling at—as usual—the writing-table.

"If they weren't," I could not forbear replying, "one couldn't ever tell one's husband from one's gardener, could one?"

"I can't ever imagine how you can tell them from one another now," Laura replied. "I mean, Charles is always walking out of the house carrying bass and those awful kind of scissors and a pair of steps, and poor Flugg is always just wiping his boots at the door because he's got to come in and move the furniture about."

It was one of those sketchy inaccurate descriptions that yet have a certain vividness about them. But I only inquired whether Laura knew any way of finding out what thirty-eight pounds a year came to weekly.

"No," said Laura with the utmost indifference. "And I don't think you understood what I meant about men. I don't mean different from one another actually."

"Don't you?" I said. "How would it be to reduce the whole thing to *pence*? Except that it would seem like dealing with millions, there'd be so many figures."

"In some ways of course they're all exactly alike," pursued Laura. "Never wanting to go anywhere, and liking Football Results better than HENRY HALL, and wanting the car to sit in the garage all day instead of taking that poor wretched Mrs. Puffin and the daughter with the goitre to the Social."

"Laura," I said, "you weaken your own case by the introduction of the personal element. Charles never *has* cared for Mrs. Puffin, or the daughter with the goitre either. And it hasn't got anything whatever to do with men not liking parties or HENRY HALL or anything. And please tell me, if you know, how many times twelve goes into thirty-eight if it's pounds. Or into three-hundred-and-sixty-five if it's days."

"Good gracious, you can't do that!" Laura cried, looking thoroughly startled. "I mean, I think you'll get into the most frightful muddle if you do. Besides, it's really a perfect example of what I was saying. Any man would be able to do that quite easily, standing on his head. That just shows you how different they are."



"Where is Covent Garden Opera House, please?"
"Oppersite Bow Street Perlice Station, Lady."

"I thought you said they were all exactly alike."

"But utterly different from us. That's what I meant. They seem to know by nature about new washers, and how many times you can go into three-hundred-and-sixty-five, and what it means when a car suddenly won't go and you know for a fact there's absolutely nothing wrong with it."

"Except that it won't go."

"I don't call that having something wrong with it exactly," Laura said firmly.

I admitted that I knew what she meant.

"But Charles definitely *would* say that a car that wouldn't go had something wrong with it."

"He *has* said so. More than once. There you are," said Laura, "that just shows you how entirely different they are from us. It's a completely different outlook."

I agreed with her at once.

Instead of putting an end to the whole subject and leaving me free to start tackling the thirty-eight pounds on an entirely new basis—which I believe I could have done, given time—my assent seemed to afford Laura a fresh impetus.

"Just think of the extraordinary way they talk to begin with," she said—although we weren't anywhere near the beginning, but rather, I hoped, nearing the end.

"Laura," I said, "you have never in this house heard anything of the kind. Charles is most particular."

"Oh, yes," said Laura blithely. "I didn't mean what you mean. Not anything *exciting*. On the contrary. I mean they talk about frightful things like the French Cabinet and the state of wheat and foot-and-mouth disease and the tonnage of ships. And they go on for hours and hours and seem frightfully thrilled. But they don't even listen if one says anything about the Manor House people's temporary cook having run away because she said the servants were starved."

"Laura!" I cried, "why on earth didn't you tell me sooner?"

When Charles came in an hour later I naturally put my little problem about the thirty-eight pounds—still no nearer to elucidation—before him. With quiet simplicity I admitted that I could make neither head nor tail of it.

"Naturally," said Charles. "I've heard your voices going on and on for the last forty-five minutes."

I said that Laura had simply been telling me something rather interesting.

But Laura said: "There—that's just what I mean!" E. M. D.

A Rhyme for March

When sniff and sneeze show forth their power
On humble and on swanky,
The Ancient Greeks prove right, for our
Necessity's Ἀνάγκη.

"Mr. A. S. Judd, who has been a missionary in the wildest parts of Nigeria for 25 years, told how he escaped being killed by head-hunters in an interview at Cape Town."
Scots Paper.

Perhaps headline-hunters are meant.

A Home-Made Gash-Mak or Yas-Mask

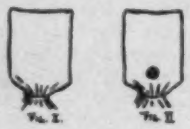
FIRST of all let us get this straight. On no account must we confuse the Yas-mask with the Gask-mash, or rather Gas-mak.

The Yash-mask, which is of course an Eastern variety of elongated handkerchief permanently attached to the noses of the ladies of the harem—the Yas-mask, as I was saying (Yask-mash?) is a symbol (not to be confused with the *cimbal*, a species of twin dinner-plate or flattened and circular triangle, squared)—the Yash-mask, as I keep trying to say, is a symbol of the Oriental barbarism which refused to allow its ladies to breathe the free air unless filtered. The Gas-mak, on the other hand, is of course purely Occidental in origin, and is a symbol (*see* above) of the culture of the West, which allows man and woman alike to breathe the air freely. Until, that is to say, the air in the Gash-mak is exhausted, when everyone is allowed to breathe gas, which is, after all, much more expensive.

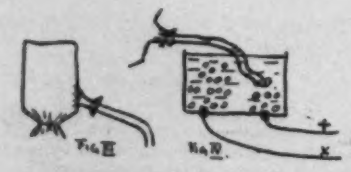
After weighing that up I feel that it will be much more sensible if I tell you how to make a *Yash-mask*, not a Gas-mak. It is much easier for one thing, and remember a Yash-mask is just as effective as a Gas-mak as a Gas-mak is (as a Yash-mask).

And now to business.

Take a cloth bag, big enough to hold your head. Place head in bag. Tie a piece of rope or twine (a piece of twine) around the neck (of bag) and the neck (of body) simultaneously. (Fig. 1.)



You are now breathing the air in the bag, which will not last long, so hurry up and cut a hole near the mouth. Breathe thankfully. (Fig. 2.)



Now take a piece of pipe (gas-pipe will do if the gas has been cleared out) and fasten it to the hole in the bag. (Fig. 3.) All you now need is a long memory. (Joke. *See* Fig. 3 and elephants in *Enc. Brit.*)

Now for the interesting *chemical* part. Take a tank. Fill it with water. Insert a couple of terminals in the bottom of the tank and join them by means of a wire to the electric-supply. (Yes, I know, but that is only because you don't *understand* yet. Be patient.)

Now, are you ready?

Switch on the electric current.

Now (Fig. 4) the electricity is splitting the water (H_2O) into Hydrogen and Oxygen. All you have to do is to wiggle your gas-piping about so as to catch the bubbles. (I ought to have mentioned that the tank should have a glass top.)

Do *not* catch the hydrogen bubbles—they are no good to you—catch the oxygen ones (fewer but more nourishing).

If you are in doubt as to the nature of the bubble, hold a lighted match in it. If it blazes up it was oxygen: a pity you wasted it. If it explodes, it was hydrogen: no loss at all. If it goes out it's probably the water.

Co-operation

IT was Edith's Aunt Agatha who sent us the Pastel-Smiths. She wrote to say that she had met a charming young married couple, both artists, and that they were temporarily homeless owing to their having sub-let one flat and the new flat not being ready. What she particularly liked about them, said Aunt Agatha, was their unselfish consideration for each other. She felt that it would do Edith and me a lot of good to have them staying with us for a fortnight or so.

Weakly we consented, and wrote to say that the 2.15 was the best train, and the bus from the station would drop them within five minutes' walk of our door. On the morning of the day they were due to arrive we had a telegram from the loving husband. "MY WIFE IS A LITTLE WEAK AFTER INFLUENZA. CAN YOU POSSIBLY MEET TRAIN WITH CAR."

"I like to see a man who thinks of his wife's health," said Edith approvingly. So I borrowed Colonel Hogg's car and met them at the station. I couldn't help remarking to Edith that Mrs. Pastel-Smith seemed to be absolutely bouncing with health, but Edith said that it only proved how much her husband loved her that he should worry about her even when there was no need.

We drove home, and we had hardly got inside the house when Mrs. Pastel-Smith drew me aside.

"About food, Mr. Conkleshill," she said. "I suppose you'll think me frightfully rude if I ask you what you've got for dinner to-night?"

"Not at all," I said in surprise.

"*Thank* you," she said, pressing my hand. "Myself, I am absolutely indifferent to what I eat. A jug of wine, a loaf of bread and thou, and all that sort of thing suits me fine, but the doctor has told Percy that he has got to be *very* careful. Of course if you were to put unsuitable food in front of him he would eat it and pretend to enjoy it, because he is *absolutely* the last man on earth to want to give trouble; but I thought you wouldn't mind my suggesting that a bit of sole perhaps and then roast chicken——"

I passed on the information to Edith and said how splendid it was that a wife should think so much of her husband's health.

We told them that breakfast was at 8.30, but when Mrs. Pastel-Smith had gone out of the room Percy coughed meaningly and said that for himself there was nothing he liked better than early rising, but if his wife breakfasted before nine she always had a headache for the rest of the day.

After dinner we thought we might play bridge, but Muriel told us that although Percy would *insist* on playing bridge if he thought we wanted to, he really much preferred just to sit and listen to the wireless. So we listened to the wireless.

As Edith remarked to me next morning, they had certainly discovered the great secret of married happiness, co-operation, and we both felt that we ought not to miss the chance of profiting by their example. We talked it over, and after lunch I took Mrs. Pastel-Smith into the garden and spoke gently to her.

"I'm terribly sorry," I said, "but we shall have to ask you to go to-morrow. If it were only myself I should derive the utmost happiness from your staying the full fortnight, but I fear that Edith is heading for a nervous breakdown, and the extra work entailed by your company may just make the difference. Edith herself would be the last one to suggest that she was not fit for the task, but——"

I offered to drive them to the station, but Edith took Percy aside and told him in confidence that the doctor had warned me on no account to undergo the strain of driving a car in my present state of health; so they went by bus.



"'E CUT UP ROUGH ABOUT IT, DID HE?"
"MY DEAR, HE WAS LIKE A RED RAG IN A CHINA SHOP."

Confession

I KNOW a lot of people who
Can do things that I cannot do.
For instance, there are men who can
The movements of great armies plan,
Or have it at their finger-tips
To handle great ungainly ships;
Some, on the other hand, can tell
H_2O from HCl,
While some are thoroughly at home
With amp and anode, arc and ohm.

Although, alas! I don't possess,
As I have said, their handiness,
I always think I might have done
Had I in early years begun.

But had I started a career
Of study in my second year
And been as busy as a bee
Till I was ninety-two or -three,
I never could have had a chance
Of understanding High Finance.
What's more, I scarcely will admit
That anyone can fathom it—
That anyone can clearly see
Into the depths of Currency;
That anyone can understand
Why gold is shipped from land to land;
That anybody's brain so ranges
That it can really grasp Exchanges,
Or that confusion never reigns
Within the mind of Mr. KEYNES.

Although this grudging attitude
May seem discourteous and crude,
That's how I feel about those who
Can do things that I cannot do.

A. W. B.



"I DUNNO AS 'OW SEEIN' FOLKS 'APPY DON'T MAKE YER 'APPIER THAN IF YER WAS 'APPY YERSELF."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Whitewashing the Sea-Green

ONE by one the execrated villains of history are receiving their coats of whitewash, the admired heroes are being debunked. In this rough-and-ready fashion we arrive presumably at some approximation to the truth—in the end. In *Robespierre, First Modern Dictator* (MACMILLAN, 16/-) we have as good a case as can be stated for CARLYLE'S "Sea-green Incorruptible." Mr. RALPH KORNGOLD, it seems, wrote his book originally in English, but it first appeared in French and was hailed by the editor of *La Revue d'Histoire Moderne* as the final judgment of history on its subject. It may be so, and indeed modern French historians are now far less critical of him than were writers like M. THIERS. CARLYLE was probably right when he ascribed the scathing comment directed against the Reign of Terror mainly to the fact that it was directed against the privileged classes. Mr. KORNGOLD confesses that he has given ROBESPIERRE the benefit of the doubt where doubt was possible and maintains that on many occasions he displayed a mercy, self-restraint and courage such as some of his critics might not have been able to imitate. Yet he admits that he did little or nothing to check the September massacres of 1792. He, then the most influential man in Paris, might at least have made a gesture, even if a futile one. For the rest, Mr. KORNGOLD maintains that nothing but over-confidence led to the final disaster. Up to the last ROBESPIERRE and his party felt that they were holding all the cards, and in fact they were—had HANRIOT taken even elementary precautions. He discredits the theory of attempted suicide, holding that the gendarme MERDA (whom CARLYLE calls Méda) actually fired the bullet that broke the dictator's jaw. The author plies his brush capably, even though he does on one occasion confuse *Frankenstein* with his monster.

"English Memmius"

PITT the Younger once maintained that of all lost intellectual treasures he would rather recover a speech by *Bolingbroke* (COLLINS, 12/6) than anything. Yet BOLINGBROKE has lain thirty years without a biography—an omission which Sir CHARLES PETRIE has at last admirably repaired. Lord CHESTERFIELD, I believe, found HENRY ST. JOHN "engaging"—but that was only for his "address." He was actually a toper and something of a cad. His political activities were usually models of enlightened self-interest; but they were less detrimental to the nation than those of such contemporaries as MARLBOROUGH; and he stood, theoretically at least, for the soundest Tory policy broached till the rise of DISRAELI. His present biographer has used him with profound understanding and reasonable sympathy. He proves the outstanding promise of the youth who wrote "War and absolute government are two of God's sharpest judgments"; and, while noting the maladroit nature of the maturer statesman's efforts to recall JAMES III., makes a good case for the English

Jacobites whose bad fortune, combined with popular apathy and Whig adroitness, secured the throne for the House of Hanover.

The Game Fishes

Fish and Find Out
Is a book all about
Catching salmon and trout,
Also sea-trout;
Major SIMPSON herein
Teaches "fly," "worm" and "spin,"
Till we put every fin
To complete rout.

He preaches the rules
Of the angling schools
By lochs or brown pools
Of great rivers;
Yet there's anecdote pat
Or a jest to get at
In each pedantry that
He delivers.

This book of the Game
Fish (the BLACKS sell the same)
Is one which I'd name
Without strictures;
Experto crede;
G. D. ARMOUR (than he
Who better can be?)
Draws the pictures.

Arctic Journeys

It is not difficult to understand the fascination of *Arctic Journeys* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 21/-) alike for the armchair traveller and the explorer. All the qualities that raise man above the brute creation are called forth in him by the unceasing struggle against the climatic and other hardships that beset the path of the wanderer in those inhospitable regions. These hardships and dangers seem hardly existent in Mr. EDWARD SHACKLETON'S modest and unadorned narrative of the adventures of the Oxford University Ellesmere Land Expedition, which sailed, like so many expeditions before it, from the Pool of London in July, 1934, and, unlike some of its predecessors, returned safely to England in October, 1935, having in the main achieved what it set out to do. Of a winter spent far within the Arctic circle to the accompaniment of B.B.C. programmes and the joys of good comradeship Mr. SHACKLETON writes so enticingly that he almost persuades me that the Arctic is *the* ideal wintering-place. "Almost"—because I suspect Mr. SHACKLETON of placing a somewhat different interpretation from mine upon what he euphemistically calls "reasonable" hardship. An inspiring book.

American Vendetta

The intrinsic ugliness of its theme—a blood-feud in the pioneering days of Alabama—is not bettered for *The Long Night* (EYRE AND SPOTTISWOODE, 7/6) by a monotonous violence of handling. I see that an English critic has praised the "masculine idiom" of this American best-seller; but the management of its reiterated murders reminds me of nothing so much as the ogreish technique of the grind-his-bones-to-make-my-bread order, so dear to the innocent masculinity of the nursery. The head of a pioneering family, one *Cameron McIvor*, tries to outwit a gang of slave-stealers, is dubbed a "black-livered abolitionist" and murdered. His kinsfolk meet and decide that every man in the gang concerned shall die; and the vendetta opens just after JOHN BROWN'S raid and is pursued throughout the War of Secession. Enlisted for the most part in the Southern forces, the revengers encounter some difficulty in reconciling their military duties with the sleuthing that is their main



TRAVEL-DE-LUXE

"I'VE WAITED TWENTY MINUTES FOR A 13 BUS, AND THERE'S BEEN NOTHING BUT 11'S AND 6'S. DAM DISGRACEFUL!"

"THAT'S RIGHT, SIR, BUT THERE'S A NICE BUNCH OF 13'S DUE IN A FEW MINUTES, AND YOU'LL BE ABLE TO TAKE YOUR PICK OF THEM."

preoccupation. Hence the virtual betrayal by *Pleasant McIvor* of a gallant brother-in-arms, which, with a vigorous description of the fighting around Chattanooga, distinguishes Mr. ANDREW LYTLE's promising but somewhat unchastened book.

Mr. Priestley Looks at the World.

During a nocturnal vigil in a hut in Arizona—hence *Midnight on the Desert* (HEINEMANN, 8/6)—Mr. J. B. PRIESTLEY ruminated on the experiences of a winter spent in America, and home again in Highgate he has remembered and recorded his ruminations. But this presentation at two removes, so to speak, while helping to give coherence to a discourse which wanders from place to place and from topic to topic, has by no means dimmed the vividness of his impressions. Whether it be the Grand Canyon or the Boulder Dam or the garish charms of Los Angeles which he is describing, he has the gift of communicating his immediate vision in all its colour and clarity. Description, however, is not his main business in this book, which is both, as its sub-title proclaims, "a chapter of autobiography" and an unsystematic statement of its author's philosophy. Mr. PRIESTLEY, though a self-confessed romantic, is an honest realist, and while he accepts things as they are and enjoys a good many of them, and has no futile hankering to put back the clock (one of his delights being the spectacle of complicated machinery performing its proper functions), he is profoundly anxious about the all-too-probable shape of things to come. In short, as must every novelist of these times who is not content to be merely a raconteur, he has turned sociologist. But he is an unusually stimulating one, who sets down his doubts and conclusions, as he presents the amusing surfaces of life, in a prose which is clean, vigorous, well-nourished and sometimes eloquent.



"HAVE THEY GOT A REFRIGERATOR HERE?"
"YES, I SLEPT IN IT LAST NIGHT."

Borders of Empire

Mr. EDWARD THOMPSON, most subtle of our Eastern interpreters, continues his good work in *Burmese Silver* (FABER, 7/6). This contains, as a novel should, a fair amount of incident and concludes with an effective finale. The characters, notably *Gussie* the Eurasian, are extremely well drawn. The scenic glories of Northern Burma are enthusiastically described. All these attractions may be found elsewhere; in this author alone do we meet the sensitive adaptation of mind to each new topic as it arises, the eagerness to absorb the essence of a matter before pronouncing judgment, and the gift of extracting strangeness from the familiar. In this volume he finds time to discuss the philosophy of head-hunting, to consider the triumphs and failures of British administration and to make apposite comment on a number of modern beliefs. At all times he enlarges our circle of ideas. An excellent book, stuffed with good things and handsomely presented by its publishers.

Precious Stones

A valuable diamond necklace caused most of the trouble in *Mystery of Mr. Jessop* (GOLLANCZ, 7/6). First of all, it led *Jessop* to his doom, and later on it provoked several jewel-hunting motorists to exceed the speed-limit as they hastened from London to the Cotswolds. For reasons both sordid and sane a large number of people were interested in this necklace, and among them was *Detective-Sergeant Bobby Owen*, who carried out a difficult task with characteristic modesty. Let me, however, beg Mr. E. R. PUNSHON to refrain from placing *Bobby* in positions so perilous that a special Providence is required to protect him. Current fiction is not suffering from a lack of heroes with idiodically charmed lives, but I hope that *Bobby* will never have to be numbered among them. For the rest, Mr. PUNSHON has given us a pretty problem to solve, and his rather satirical humour adds spice to a thoroughly well-told story.

The Vanishing Lady

Mr. J. J. CONNINGTON has, in *A Minor Operation* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 7/6), gone far to remove a grievance which, whether rightly or wrongly, I was still entertaining against our sensational novelists. In short I have been convinced that they hardly ever give Chief Constables a fair deal. Mr. CONNINGTON, however, is not on my black list, for he allows his Chief Constable to possess both brains and energy. *Sir Clinton Driffield* may be a little pompous but he was mainly instrumental in discovering by whom *Deerhurst* on his release from prison was murdered, and in tracking down *Mrs. Deerhurst*, who, with no desire to meet her husband, had hastily bolted. A telegram (reproduced on the book's exceptionally clever jacket) and a typewriter call for your especial consideration, and Mr. CONNINGTON's villain is of his kind a prize specimen. He was, I say it without shame, double-dyed.

"Interest is being taken in the 1s. Ordinary shares of Salts (Saltaire), Ltd., spinners and manufacturers. The company has announced an important fusion with Pepper, Lee & Co."—*Financial Paper.*

We offer our respectful condiments.

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Charivaria

"The Old School Tie spirit is strong among the educated classes of China," says a traveller. We are looking forward to hearing the Eastern Brothers on the radio.

* * *

A newspaper correspondent thinks that the C.I.D. Flying Squad should have a more dignified title. Why not "The Go-men of the Yard"?

* * *

"What London says to-day Europe will say to-morrow," remarks a writer. So that Europe is saying at this moment what Manchester said the day before yesterday.

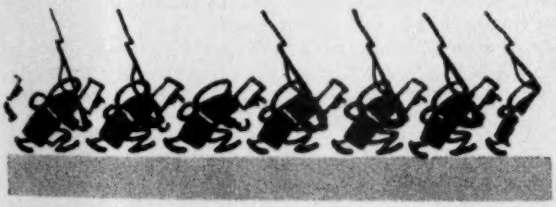
* * *

"I went to every shop in town and couldn't get what I wanted," complains a correspondent. He probably wanted credit.

* * *

A recent report overstated Britain's national debt by £250,000,000. However, it is probably pretty well correct by now.

* * *



A plumber has left London to join the French Foreign Legion. Surely he can't be doing this just to forget.

* * *

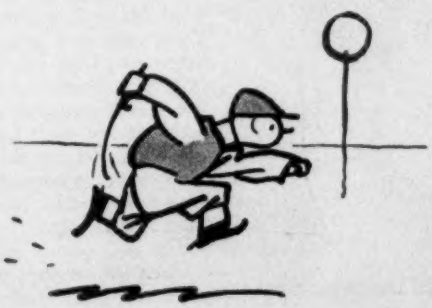
One of most fancied horses in the Grand National is reported to be suffering from nerves. Its backers trust that it will get over the jumps on the day of the race.

* * *

A visitor to Scotland complains that it is difficult to cash English cheques in some parts. So much then for those Bonny Bonny Banks.

* * *

According to a woman-writer sixpence is quite enough to give for a bundle of asparagus. This should, furthermore, include tips.



"It takes about ten minutes for an after-dinner speaker to bore his audience," says an M.P. Of course a real expert can do it in five.

* * *

One of our seaside resorts proposes to tighten up its regulations regarding courting couples on the beach this year. Local coastguards, we understand, will be instructed to keep a very sharp look-out for snugglers.

* * *

A meteorologist says that we should have some hot weather this year. We hope it won't be just last summer warmed up again.

* * *



A famous actor says he would like to spend six months just letting the rest of the world go by. He should try touring in a second-hand car.

* * *

Features of a new model car include a cocktail cabinet, a card-table, a book-shelf, a radio-set and a sun-ray lamp. There are also windows installed at each side through which a view of the scenery can be obtained if desired.

* * *

An M.P. declares that there will be plenty of jobs going between now and the Coronation for men who can help in any way in making stands. There seems to be no special reason for our Test cricketers to hurry home.

* * *

"Do you know what turnip-tops are good for?" queries a nature-healer. Not a bit, but we should imagine that turnips find them fairly useful.

* * *

A Turf critic asserts that many steeplechase jockeys are too impulsive. In fact they persist in taking their fences before their horses come to them.

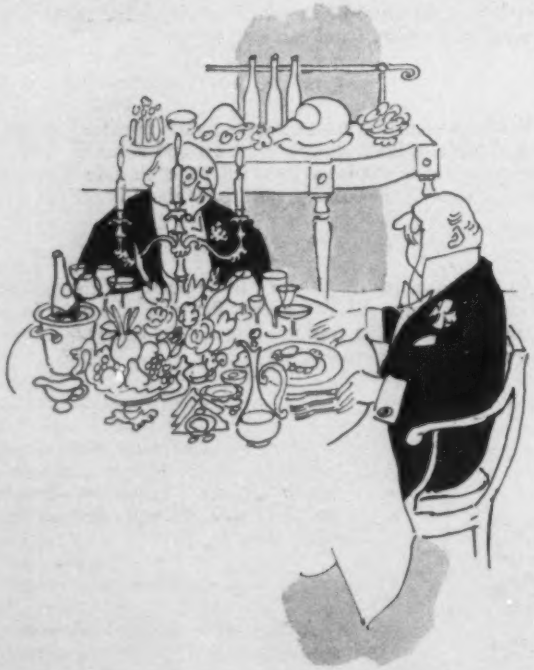
Howitzers for Two

IT is always fascinating to speculate on which would have been the nicest period of history in which to live, but somehow one never gets very far with it. The debits and credits are too complicated. I was thinking the other day about Elizabethan times, and it worked out something like this:—

Cr.	*Dr.*
(1) Might have met SHAKESPEARE.	(1) Might have got plague.
(2) Chance to sing lots of madrigals.	(2) BACH not yet born.
(3) Less chance of being killed by a car.	(3) More chance of being killed in a brawl.
(4) I look nice in doublet and hose.	(4) Plumbing not invented.

And so on.

In the end, of course, one always decides that Inquisitions and World Wars about cancel out, and that the Former Days were just about the same as these from the point of view of Net Assets and Sundry Debtors. There is one feature of Life in Olden Times, however, that has always put me off badly. I refer to this duelling business. I can't help thinking that it would need a good many attractions to make up for an age in which one was constantly expected to get up at dawn and engage in mortal combat with a practised killer just because he had trodden on one's toe or because one had made some remark (probably quite true) about his aunt.



"IF *only* ONE DIDN'T HAVE TO WASH UP AFTERWARDS!"

I know it is a shameful confession, but I am at once a born coward and an acid critic of other people's aunts. Licence to combine these two characteristics is to me one of the great arguments for living in 1937. I have therefore been rather alarmed to note that duelling is again recognised as the proper method of settling disputes in Germany, and that a gentleman in Central Europe has just challenged thirty-two people to duels with sabres because they were catty about his wife. What if the revival spreads? It worries me to find that all through romantic fiction, whilst one gets plenty of tips on how to fight duels, one gets absolutely none on how to avoid fighting them. No one, if challenged, ever pleads a conscientious objection or just apologises. Even villains, who must *know* that they will be killed, positively rush on their fate. *Sir Andrew Aguecheek* and *Mr. Winkle*, who seem to have held views very like my own, only got away with it by the merest chance; and when *Mr. Chips* challenges the Indian to a duel, "the Indian with a club and him with a pisened darning-needle," the match only falls through because the Indian "lacks backers to the required sum." The implication is that if you refused a challenge you would be cut at Crockford's, which would be awful. But surely, *surely* there were people who thought it less awful to be cut at Crockford's than to be run through at Lincoln's Inn Fields?

For my own part I always feel that far too little was made of the rule that the person challenged had choice of weapons. The application of this rule seems to have been much too restricted. Broadly, if you were challenged by somebody like Mr. J. EMRYS LLOYD, you chose pistols, whilst if your opponent were a person who habitually shot the pips out of a card thrown into the air, you chose swords. But it never seems to have occurred to anyone to choose anything else. On this basis I have long ago resolved that if Mr. EMRYS LLOYD ever challenges me I shall choose swords *and* pistols. He will have the sword and I shall have the pistol, and the duel will take place at twenty paces. Even so I don't think he'll have very much to worry about.

My main plea, however, is that duelling shall get away from the old-fashioned swords-and-pistols basis. And it is therefore with great satisfaction, mixed with relief, that I hail Herr PEYER of Budapest—the man who in my judgment is at last bringing a touch of modernity and *sense* into duelling. Somebody has just challenged Herr PEYER, and, being a gunner, he has chosen howitzers. He proposes that the duellists, each with a cannon, shall place themselves upon two hills, one on either side of Budapest. And thereafter may the best man win.

Now this seems to me a delightful idea, and if anybody ever challenges me to a duel I shall adopt it. I don't know *much* about howitzers, but then nor will the other man. There may be a spice of danger in it to somebody, but as long as we both stay by our guns, I should think, we, the principals, would be delightfully safe. And then imagine the solemn pageantry of the scene! Just as the dawn is breaking we shall meet, my adversary and I, with our seconds. For the last time his chief second will ask *my* chief second (a gunnery instructor) if his principal will withdraw his remarks about his principal's aunt. For the last time I shall refuse.

Then the seconds will produce the old pair of duelling 5·9's and their calibre will be carefully measured. I, as



LE COQ D'OR

M. BLUM. "THIS IS A COCK THAT WILL FIGHT FOR THE HONOUR AND SAFETY OF FRANCE."



THE BRITISH CHARACTER

A TENDENCY NOT TO JOIN THE LADIES

the challenged, will calmly and thoughtfully select the gun which seems to have the more perfect bore. We shall be issued with ammunition, my seconds keeping a watchful eye to see my opponent doesn't slip in a charge of grape-shot or a gas-shell. Then, limbering up the guns behind tractors, we shall manœuvre back to back and drive off in opposite directions at an agreed speed of ten miles an hour to opposite hills. After driving for exactly half-an-hour we shall stop, wheel, and discharge our first shots. My chief second, peering tensely through his field-glasses, will rap out, "More elevation. That hit the Town Hall." After a few shots on either side there will be no more ammunition, honour will be satisfied, and we shall meet and shake hands. How sensible! How obvious! How essentially modern! There we are, my opponent and I, completely unhurt. It was *we* who were stupid enough to quarrel, but nevertheless we have succeeded in settling the whole matter without the slightest damage to either of us.

The only people who have suffered are a few stupid citizens who were messing about round the Town Hall when my "sighter" arrived. Could anything be more in the correct war-time tradition of to-day?

The Low-Down on the Dope

A Discouragement

THE song-writing business is a funny racket;
People say you can make a packet;
That's why it attracts so many saps
(Each of whom could live on nothing more than a cellarful of schnapps).

When you write a song you think it's a fine piece of work
The music's sweet, the lyric bright, the rhythm with just the right amount of jerk,
But the publisher says, "Phooey,
It's a lot a hooey,"
Or, "It ain't commoishal, and besides it's too fast,
It's too slow, it's too hot, the last
Line don't fit in.
I don't see why you don't start in
Loining to paint.
Dat's respectable too; you tink it ain't?"

But the publisher next-door
Is a different sort of bore.
He thinks it's a marvellous song,
He thinks there's nothing wrong;
But unfortunately he's just been sold a pup
And of course he's absolutely full up.
Would you come back next year at four o'clock?
And please remember to knock.

So you leave the publishers flat—
No, you needn't raise your hat.
Now you go to Elstree where the films are made.
(Don't forget all this is work for which you don't get paid.)
You tell the doorman whom you want to see,
And when he comes back in two hours or three
He asks you to wait a little while
(If he's lucky, you'll smile);
Mr. A, he says, is in conference (since you've come he's been in four),
Or he's on the cutting-room floor;
With his secretary he's tidying up the room,
Saving the expense of a broom.

Finally you see Mr. A.;
It's taken you all day.
You play him your song;
It doesn't take long,
But he has time to speak twice
On the phone and dictate several nice
Letters
On business and other matters.

Still, he likes your number very well,
He thinks it's swell,
And maybe he could write a picture round it.
You try to remain calm but you don't sound it.
May you come and see him some time? Yes, you may.
May you phone him? Yes, any day.

You wait a week, then you call and ring,
But you don't hear a thing.
When ten weeks have gone by
You tear your hair and cry;
But suddenly, with a suddenness that numbs,
A letter comes.
Quick—open it! What does it say?
"We accept your song." HOORAY!
But wait, that isn't the end—
"Provided you back the picture we have in hand!"

Well, folks, here's the low-down on the song-writing biz.
And if this isn't low-down, I'd like to know what is!

Our Brighter Weddings Corner

"The magnificent wedding ceremony was attended by over 3,000 guests and the public procession from the bridegroom's house to the home of the brilliantly illuminated bride's parents was something out of the ordinary."—*Indian Paper.*

"Wanted, Vertical Millers."—*Evening Paper Advt.*

Horizontal boxers need not apply.



Works Clerk. "DO YOU KNOW IF YOUR FATHER WILL BE BACK AT WORK NEXT WEEK?"
Child. "DOCTOR SAYS HE DOESN'T THINK SO, 'COS HE'S AFRAID COMPENSATION'S SET IN."

The Price of Beauty

(It has been suggested that cosmetics should be taxed.)

WHOSE, Pyrrha, is the guileless heart
For which you now prepare
With shrewd device and curious art
To make yourself so fair?
Alas! it is no lovesick boy,
No rich and comely swain
Whose bosom you will swell with joy,
But Mr. CHAMBERLAIN.

Yet chafe not at the rising fee,
Repress that envious tear;
Man's self has not escaped scot-free—
Think of the tax on beer;
Though at more cost than heretofore
Your cheek suggests the rose,
He too must pay a penny more
To rubify his nose.

Think, further, how these arduous days
May drain your coffers dry,
But, lo! they bring you sweets of praise
That else had passed you by;
Your glories, unbeknown of late,
Now stir the rapturous Muse,
And you must bless the stroke of fate
That placed them in the news.

The brows above those eyes of flame,
Those bravely ardent lips,
May never quite obscure her fame
Who launched a thousand ships,
But future bards may scarce omit
To hymn with sounding strain
The face that did its modest bit
To build one aeroplane.

"Gas Masque"

NOBODY can quite make out why Sergeant Pike should be so much of a purist where military terminology is concerned. There *are* instructors, even Regular Army ones, who will not actually flinch upon hearing a rifle referred to as a gun or a scabbard as a sheath. But say a thing like that to Sergeant Pike and he will probably throw a fit. Ever since his appointment as Gas Instructor he has been waging a bitter war against the "mask" school of speech, as opposed to those either sufficiently low in rank or feeble in spirit to be coerced into referring to them as "respirators." It was a well-known sore point of his, the source of Public Amusement No. 1, "Baiting the Pike."

"About those new gas-masks——" you would begin carelessly, meeting him in the corridor.

An expression of pain would flash across Pike's face. "Gas . . .?" he would inquire with elaborate bewilderment.

"Gas-masks," you would repeat firmly, turning the knife in the wound.

"You mean—er—*respirators*?" he would say with a puzzled look, as if he could find no other explanation and yet hesitated to lay so grave a charge at your door.

"That's right," you would say cheerfully. "Can you let me have a dozen masks for instructional purposes this evening?"

So simple, you see, and it never failed to work. As a matter of fact a special fund was founded by Lieutenant Finch to provide a prize for the first member of the Mess to trap him into using the forbidden word. It was known as the Pike Perversion Fund (1936), and it rose in no time by leaps and bounds to the total of four shillings and sevenpence.

All this helps to explain the consternation last Friday when the fatal word was pronounced in Pike's own squad. In the middle of a lengthy recital by Pike of the more intimate organs of the apparatus, a querulous voice was distinctly heard to say, "I can't get my mask out."

For a space there was a painful silence. The more nervous cast their eyes apprehensively upwards, although no bolts fell.

"'Oo said that?" demanded Pike.

The squad dissolved rapidly to either side, leaving the culprit standing alone, still tugging vainly at his apparatus.

"Ho!" said Pike fiercely, "so it's you, is it? I suppose I can't expect no better from a recruit, but just you listen to me, Wilks. I don't mind what you calls it outside; you can call it a mask or you can call it a flamin' face-fender, but while you're here you're in the army, and you'll call it a perishin' respirator—see?"

The squad resumed its instruction, marvelling at such clemency. Sapper Wilks, having at last dislodged his respirator, was having trouble with one of his ears, which had got caught in an elastic strap, when the door opened and Lieutenant Finch walked in.

"Good evening," he said cheerily. "Gas-mask drill, eh?" and passed on, followed by Sergeant Pike's reproachful gaze.

"And take that grin off your face, Moore," he said ferociously as soon as Finch was out of earshot. "Has I was sayin', on-the-cautionary-word-'Gas'-you-places-the-right-'and——"

"Evening, Pike," said Captain Crabbe pleasantly.

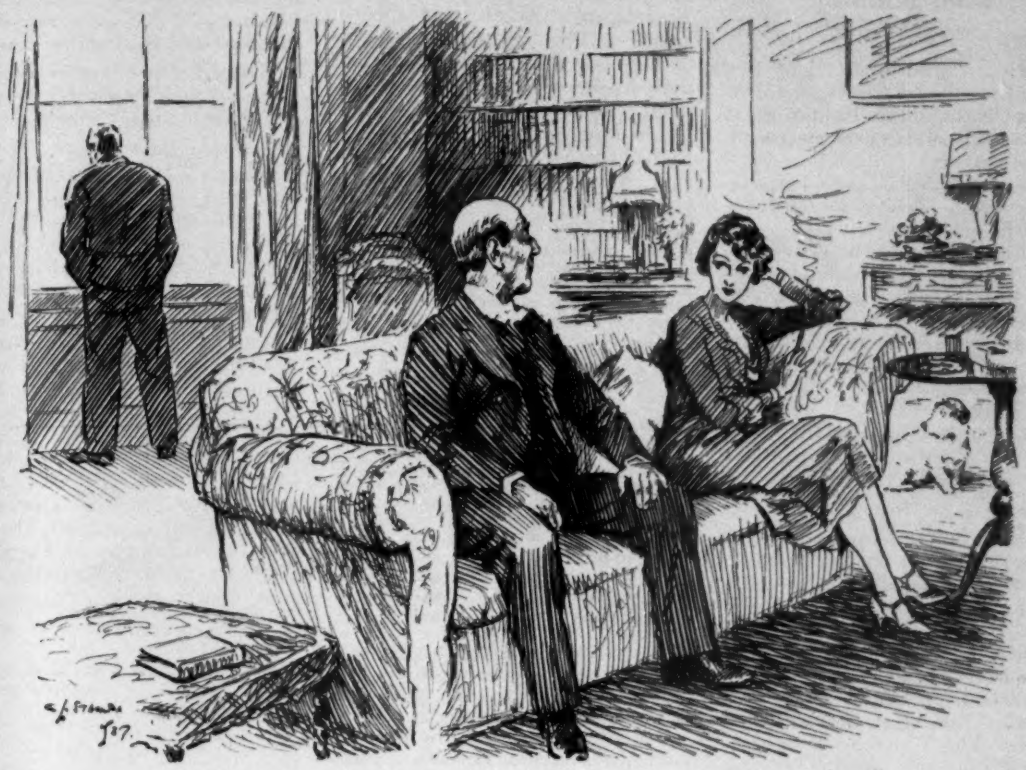
"Good evening, Sir," said Pike, getting in first. "Instruction in the use of the gas-respirator, Sir."

"Oh, good! The Colonel's got some rather important visitors, and there's just a chance that they may be coming round this evening, so I'd like you to have everything in order. That man over there, for example: he seems to be having some difficulties with his mask." He pointed to the luckless Wilks, who was now vainly trying to stuff away an unusually springy air-tube, and went out.

There was another painful silence while Pike scanned the faces of his squad closely for any signs of insubordination.

"'Iggs," he said suspiciously, "you





"My husband gave up smoking for Lent, you know."
"Splendid! And you, dear lady?"
"Well, I've been living in the same house with him."

didn't 'appen to be laughin', did you?"

Sapper Higgs hastened to disclaim any such irreverence.

"Nor you neither, Phillips? No? Well . . ." He still seemed not quite satisfied. "Has I was sayin', on-the-cautionary-word-'Gas'-wait-for-it-'Iggs-on-the-word-'Gas'-you-places-the-right-'and——"

Crabbe's head appeared suddenly round the edge of the door. "The Colonel's coming, Pike!" he hissed. "Put up a good show; and tell that blamed fool Wilks to stick his mask away properly."

His head vanished as suddenly as it had appeared.

Sergeant Pike swallowed hard. "Wilks," he said with emotion, "I should just 'ate to be thought of as I'm thinkin' of you now. What *'ave* you been and gone and done with that m—with that respirator?"

With the perversity of inanimate objects the air-tube ceased its struggles and surrendered just before the Colonel walked in, so that it was a model squad that presented itself to his eyes and to those of the Persons with him.

"Good evening," said the Colonel. "Just carry on, will you? Instruction in the use of the gas-mask," he explained to Them.

"Ah, yes," They said graciously. "And the new type of mask, We see."

I must say I admired Sergeant Pike at that moment. Against a mere Captain, a Colonel even, he would have held his ground. But against Those from the War-Office, the Sanctum Bellorum itself . . . Without an atom of expression in his face he gracefully bowed himself to the inevitable and addressed his squad.

"We begin," he said, "with a brief reesumay of the helementary principles of the gas-mask, its constituents and its use. The gas-mask, as you most probably know . . ."

We debated for a long time whether or not to offer the four-and-sevenpence to the Colonel, but after all he wasn't a member of the Fund, and we had a shrewd idea that he might not approve.

I am now glad to be able to announce that at an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Council of the Pike Perversion Fund (President, Captain Crabbe; Secretary, Lieutenant Finch) it was unanimously agreed that the Fund should be acquired *in toto*, together with all assets and goodwill attaching thereto, by the newly-formed Pike (Provision of Beer for) Fund (1937). And in the meantime Pike has been put on Lewis Gun demonstration.

How to Look Pathetic

"Wearing a blue coat and a dark straw hat, with a spray of artificial trousers, she was a pathetic figure as she stood in the box."—*Liverpool Paper.*

"Both bride and bridegroom, who were the recipients of many valuable presents, left later on a honeymoon tour."
Report of Hampshire Wedding.

Surely not together?

Word-Skirmish

Laterality

Gosh! "Unilateral" has now swarmed on to the streets, and even our great MINISTER OF TRANSPORT, in a prepared Parliamentary statement, has said that

> "Unilateral parking has been tried experimentally."—*Hansard, 8th March, Column* 802.

We have now, alas! become accustomed to "unilateral action," "unilateral disarmament," and even, as I have recorded before, "unilateral pacts."

In one speech last week Mr. ALEXANDER scored a "unilateral force," a "unilateral defence," and "unilateral basis" twice.

> "Does the First Lord really think we are going to believe that a unilateral force of . . . is going to be capable of defending the whole of the British Empire on a unilateral basis?"—*Hansard, 11th March, Col.* 1386.

All these we have sadly suffered because the theme was Foreign Affairs, and Foreign Affairs must always be expressed in words like jelly-fish or tapeworms. But we must utter a mild protest when the loathsome "unilateral" invades the life of common men.

"Unilateral parking!" What does it mean? "Parking on one side only," I believe. But, if we must be so brief, why not "one-side parking," as we speak of a one-horse van, a one-way street, or a two-berth cabin?

I foresee that if this protest is not heeded we shall have bad trouble with the word. We shall have unilateral instead of one-sided arguments; we shall hear of Mr. CHURCHILL'S multilateral genius; a threesome will be a trilateral contest; and—perhaps another step—the Seven-a-Side matches will become Septilateral Rugby. Instead of writing our contributions to the Press on one side of the paper only, we shall practise unilateral composition; and, since the word is now used freely in the place of sole, single, alone, solitary, independent, or isolated, Miss GARBO will tell the world that she wishes to be unilateral, and Sir ARTHUR SALTER will be a Unilateral Member of Parliament. Gramophone-records will be bilateral; card-games quadrilateral. What a world!

I have before me now a "unilateral declaration of policy" (*Times*), and—this is a rare piece—

> "He is emphatically right in saying that no escape from that situation is offered by any conceivable *unilateral alliance*."
> *News-Chronicle.*

And there is worse, I swear, to come. Treaties and pacts, at present, are unilateral, bilateral or multilateral. But if you can have a one-sided or many-sided treaty, why not a few-sided treaty? What about "paucilateral"? I bet you, Bobby, a bag of marbles that within a year from now the word paucilateral will be sprouting strongly in the diplomatic field.

And I do not make such wagers in vain. Far off in 1932, when the genial new notions concerning "war-guilt" and the origins of the Great War were first put about, I prophesied—in these columns, July 15:—

> "It will then be said that we owe Germany whatever sums have been unjustly extracted from her by way of reparations. . . ."

This, they tell me, has just been said.

But let us return to the laterality front. Apart from the evident and intrinsic vileness of these words, they have bred, I think, some confusion in the minds of those who use them. Take "bilateral." Bilateral is used, first, in contradistinction to "unilateral," whether the subject be parking or pacts. Let us make this clear:—

Bilateral parking	=	Parking on two sides of the street
Unilateral parking	=	Parking on one side of the street
Bilateral declaration	=	A declaration by two nations, *e.g.*, France and Great Britain
Unilateral declaration	=	A declaration by one nation, *e.g.*, Germany
Bilateral pact	=	A pact between two nations
Unilateral pact	=	A pact between one nation
Bilateral alliance	=	An alliance between two nations
Unilateral alliance	=	But this is mere raving

I mean, in these days we can swallow a—an?— unilateral pact; but a—an?—unilateral alliance upsets me.

However, there we are. So far we are clear. When we see the repugnant "bilateral" we know that it is opposed to "unilateral." For example, if we read (and we shall very soon) that a bilateral marriage has been solemnised, we shall know that two people have been married, not one.

But stay! We may think we are clear. But then the Friends of Laterality and murderers of language confuse us all by bringing in "multilateral." And they oppose *that* to "bilateral." But since they have already used "unilateral" when they mean "bilateral" (*e.g.*, of pacts or alliances), it is often quite impossible to understand what they mean when they say "bilateral." Do you follow, Bobby? Well, look, then:—

Unilateral parking	=	Parking on one side
Bilateral parking	=	Parking on two sides
Multilateral parking	=	? St. James' Square or the Horse Guards
Unilateral marriage	=	A Bachelor
Bilateral marriage	=	Marriage
Multilateral marriage	=	Polygamy

But—and mark this—

Unilateral alliance	=	An alliance between two nations (well, it must. But does it?)
Bilateral alliance	=	An alliance between two nations (presumably; but who can tell?)
Multilateral alliance	=	An alliance between many nations
Paucilateral alliance	=	An alliance between a few nations
Centilateral alliance	=	An alliance between a hundred nations
Semicentilateral alliance	=	An alliance between fifty nations (and what a good name for the League!)

Is that clear? Yes, because I have explained it so well. But when these egg-brained Friends of Laterality are using the words nothing is clear. Remember that we have already had the pompous "unilateral" in three different senses (or so it seemed):—

(1) Of an action, or declaration—meaning isolated, solitary or independent, as opposed to something done in concert with many others—*i.e.*, the action might have been multilateral;

(2) Of parking, meaning on one side of a street and not on both—



"THEY CAN'T *all* HAVE FORGOTTEN; CARTWRIGHT MAJOR FOR ONE WROTE DOWN THE DATE IN BLOOD."



"I THINK WE 'LL 'AVE TO INCLUDE A COURSE ON PRACTICAL BATTLESHIP-DESIGN IN OUR NOO PROSPECTUS, CHARLIE; THERE SEEMS TO BE QUITE A BIG DEMAND FOR THE THINGS."

where the only alternative would be bilateral;

(3) Of an alliance, meaning bilateral, as opposed to multilateral; but this, as I think I remarked before, is raving nonsense.

It is not surprising, then, that when we common fellows encounter such a sentence as that which follows nobody has the faintest notion what anybody means:—

"In well-informed quarters little attempt is being made to conceal the impression that the tendency of G.'s future policy will be towards a system of mutual bilateral pacts strictly conforming to the Covenant of the League."

What does this mean? Is "bilateral" here opposed to "unilateral" or "multilateral"? (And, by the way, is there a catch in "mutual"?) You see, Bobby, if a unilateral pact or alliance is one arranged between *two* nations, a bilateral pact may concern *three*. And there is good logical ground for saying that it must. Look at the mess in this way, Bobby. Suppose that I brought off a "left and right" and slew two birds with two barrels—as, without doubt, I could, though I have never tried. That might be described by these monsters of the word-world as a "bilateral shot." There is one me, party to the transaction on the one hand, and two birds on the other. Now, in the same way, if G. makes a treaty with, say, Holland and Belgium, accepting the same obligations to each, that, from G.'s point of view, might well be described as a *bilateral* treaty, especially if Belgium and Holland did not accept any obligation to each other.

In short, Bobby, the sooner all this laterality is thrust out of our public life the better. I had intended to discuss many other important things with you to-night, but these odious words have driven me frantic. And I am now going downstairs to have a very definite bilateral whisky-and-soda.

EXERCISE

"The mountain was at once successfully evacuated."—*"The Times" Own Correspondent in Simla.*

Give any other examples in English literature of the evacuation of mountains—with maps and cross-sections.

A. P. H.

From the Agony Column

Plant Roses Now

PLANT roses now. I will! I will!
The moment that the heavens stop raining
And earth allows her sons to till
The clay she is so slow in draining.

Plant roses now. I wish I could!
Wish, did I say? I simply long to.
Bed upon bed. But what's the good
Of soil you cannot put a prong to?

I planted Madame Chatenay.
Deep, deep into the mud I sank her;
But the next night she broke away—
The wind blew and she dragged her anchor.

Down-stream she went; and now marooned
Upon an alien shore reposes,
Where, if they choose to have her pruned,
They'll get some admirable roses.

Something Too Much of This

One of the national characteristics which most endears to me the great people of the United States is their habit of taking up some game or pastime which had its heyday in this country twenty or thirty years ago, converting it into a nation-wide plague and sending it back over here as the latest thing from America. And we accept the situation. Without a murmur of protest we hand over to America the credit for having discovered the fascination of dominoes or diabolo or whatever dear old pastime may suddenly have come to their notice. We allow ourselves to be told by shopkeepers of the wonderful new game called "Snakes and Ladders" now sweeping America; we submit to having the rules of "Ludo" explained to us by our children. *Ex America*, say the gossip-writers excitedly, *semper aliquid novi*.

(No, I am not, as you all imagine, about to make a quite unwarrantable attack on "Monopoly." "Monopoly," which is brand-new and, I believe, of pure American origin, is the exception which proves my rule. It is also a game at which, after a few more weeks' intensive study, I shall be prepared to beat the best of you.)

The jig-saw puzzle craze of a year or two ago was a good example of what I mean. That honoured and hoary solace of countless convalescent Englishmen was suddenly boomed and boosted about the country as if it were America's latest and greatest gift to men. To be seen not doing a jig-saw puzzle was almost worse than to be seen without your trousers. Dash it all! if we wanted to make a craze of the thing why couldn't we do it on our own instead of waiting for instructions from across the Atlantic? We have become a nation of copy-cats. And "Knock, Knock!" *Knock*—if I may express my indignation and contempt in italics—*Knock!* When we were nice little chaps at our private schools we used to say to each other, "Do you know Michael?" "Michael who?" "My clothes-brush," and we we were pleased and happy at the effect produced. Just as pleased and happy as we were a few weeks later, when invention had run its course, to drop the whole thing and turn to pin-cricket. We little thought that twenty years afterwards the nimble burghers of New York would stick a "Knock, Knock!" in front of the stupid business and send it back to us as a daring novelty for adults.

And now (by an easy transition from games to fads or fashions) we come to this, which I take from a London evening paper of last week:—

> "For the time being one seems to hear a tremendous number of slow foxtrots: this is because of quite a new phase in dancing that has come over America, in which couples first dance a bit, slowly, then stand and talk a bit, then dance again."

Obviously the stage is set for another dashing innovation from America to sweep this country. You note that "*quite a new phase* in dancing"? Well, let me tell America that this time I am not going to stand for it. I am simply not going to have a practice, to which I and many others have been wedded since first we donned a dancing-shoe, foisted on this country as a product of the American genius. When I danced with Mona (or Joyce or Evangeline) back in the gay 'twenties we never dreamed of dancing in any way but this.

First we danced a bit, slowly.
Then we stood and talked a bit.
"I'm awfully sorry about this."
"It's chiefly my fault, I expect."
"No, no, really——"
"Well, let's try again, shall we? Ta-ta-*tum* . . ."
Then we danced again.

And this is what they call the "new phase in dancing"!

As a matter of fact we used to go further than this sometimes. We used to talk *while actually dancing*—a fashion which I daresay New York will be taking up in another ten years or so. "Bother!" I used to say, or "What a band!" or, if I wished to be particularly amusing, "Who's that funny old man with the long whiskers?" and she would reply, "Ouch!" or, "Frightful, isn't it?" or, "Do you mean my father?" as the case might be. I have even been to dances at which my partner talked to other dancers as they passed us on the floor. Of course, in the nature of things these conversations were short and rather disjointed—I recall such remarks as "Enjoying yourself, Joan?" and "Don't forget, Ronnie!"—but they were extraordinarily telling. I don't know whether this custom has yet reached America, but if it hasn't I don't altogether recommend it. "I know you are bored, young woman," I used to think, "and I don't blame you for that—I'm bored myself—but it *would* be nice if you didn't show it quite so obviously," and I used to wish I had the courage to take the girl into the buffet-room and choke her to death with sausage-rolls.

It may well be asked of me at this point, "Did you yourself never speak to anyone else while you were dancing?" Well, frankly, yes. When I was quite, quite young it sometimes happened that I would bet another young gentleman the sum of sixpence that I should get the enormous woman in red during "Paul Jones," and what more natural than that I should murmur in passing later on, "You owe me a tanner, Freddie"? I see no harm in that.

Alas! I get no tanners for my "Paul Joneses" nowadays. I doubt if I should get them even in America. All I get is the enormous woman in red.

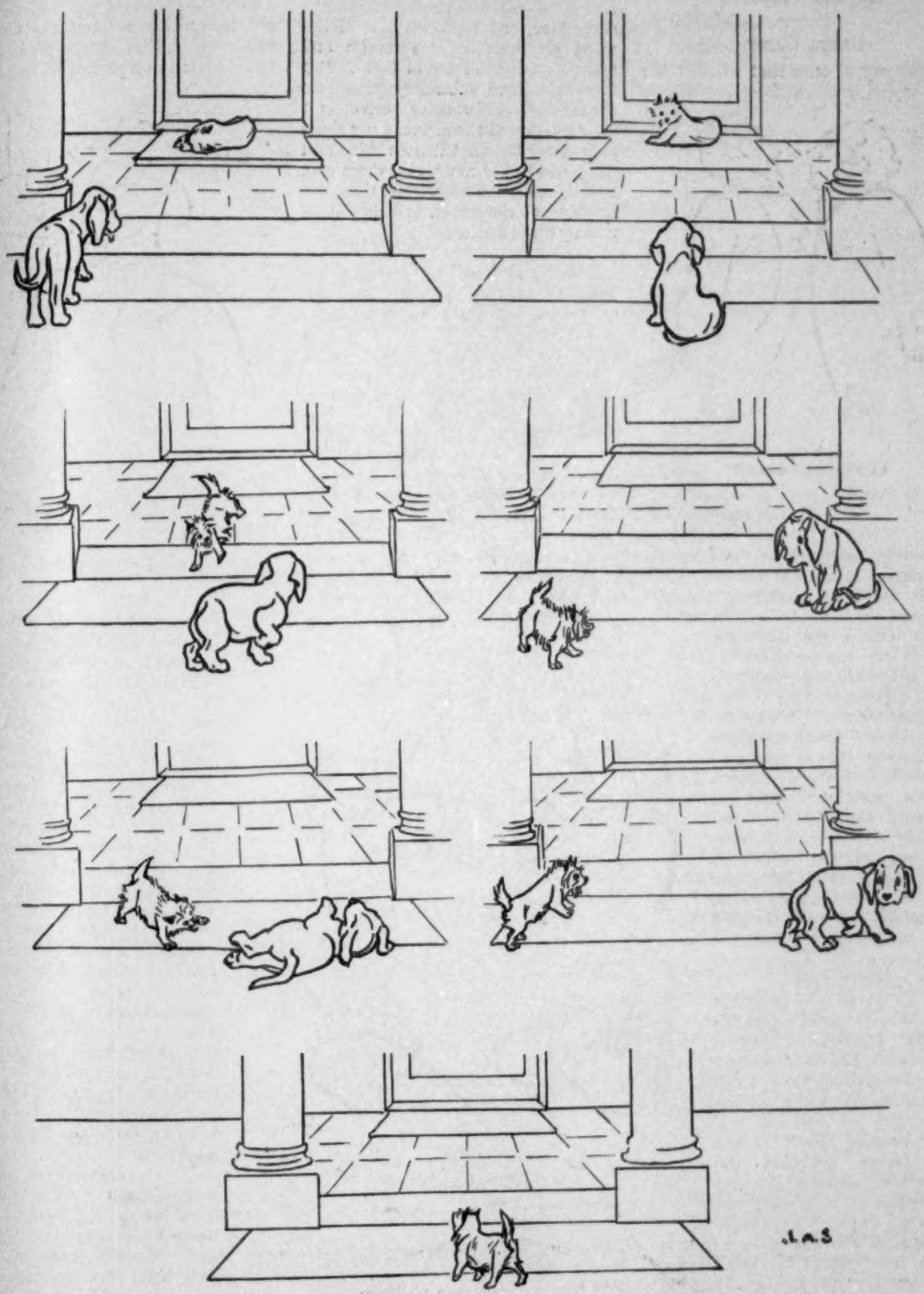
H. F. E.

Freedom

Folks with a reg'lar wage
Didn't never ought to die.
I'll tell you for why—
They've nothing to make 'em age.

They says as they envies me
On account of me owning me forge.
I've 'ad 'em say, "George,
It's different for you—you're free;
You're your own marster."
Them and their likes
If their wage stops they strikes—
Can I? I says. I arsk yer!
It's not that easy working on your own
With tools and rent to find
And customers as leaves their debts behind,
Quittin' the village quietly unbeknown.
I tells 'em so.
"If I feels ill, can I just stop away
Then come along on Friday for me pay?"
I arsks em'. No.
There's iron to buy
And all me bills.
It's worry kills.
Just let 'em try!

Folks with a reg'lar wage
Didn't never ought to age—
Didn't ought to die.



WATCHDOG

At the Pictures

GRETA GARBO

I CAN say at once that whether the



COMBAT D'AMOUR

Baron de Varville . . . . HENRY DANIELL
Armand . . . . . ROBERT TAYLOR

Marguerite Gautier of GRETA GARBO'S imagination is that of DUMAS *fils* or not, it has been beautifully thought out, and in *Camille* is beautifully played, and I can add that from it we learn—what, by some, may only have been suspected before—that the GARBO is a great actress. It may not be the true or anticipated *dame aux camellias* that is presented to us; in fact the treatment of this particular character is hardly Gallic at all and certainly, except superficially, rarely suggests the hard *demi-monde*; but what we are given instead is something so subtle and tender and pathetic that I am not surprised that the screen-play at the Empire has drawn immense queues.

The die-hards may probably resent the side-tracking of the younger ALEXANDRE, whose famous work has been employing no fewer than three modern pens to prepare it for the studio; but no one else will mind, because their united efforts have provided the GARBO with material for her own personality to mould; and the results are as I have said. *Camille* is in a double sense a moving picture, but without ROBERT TAYLOR as *Armand* it would not be so moving, nor without LIONEL BARRYMORE as *Armand's* father, nor without HENRY DANIELL as the cynical Parisian baron. This admirable English actor may have been in films before, but I had not seen him since he was on the stage here, and I congratulate Hollywood on detecting his merits and making such good use of them. But for these three subsidiary principals the GARBO's performance, perfect as it is by relation to them, would not shine as it does; but that it does shine and must add to her reputation there can, I feel, be no doubt, nor that the prestige of the screen is being enormously strengthened.

Building and pulling down and rebuilding present to me insoluble mysteries, and I do not pretend to understand why the Capitol, at the corner of Haymarket and Jermyn Street, which, though steep, seemed to be right enough and was almost new, should be destroyed and another cinema theatre set up in its place, called the Gaumont, which, although it has clocks and bas-reliefs and softer tints of decoration than the Capitol, is also steep. But swift building, pulling down and rebuilding have become London's way. In any case I hope that the Gaumont will soon give us something better to see than *Head Over Heels*, in which JESSIE



LA DAME AUX ÉPAULES

Marguerite . . . . . GRETA GARBO

MATTHEWS' slender gifts are exploited. JESSIE MATTHEWS, like a brave girl, does her best; but she has been provided with far too much to do: her songs are too long; her dances are too long; her flirtation with LOUIS BORELL is too long and her repulsion of ROBERT FLEMYNG is too long. As to what exactly happens at the end, I could not be quite sure; but the film has this novelty, that instead of the lovers being united in a prolonged and fervid



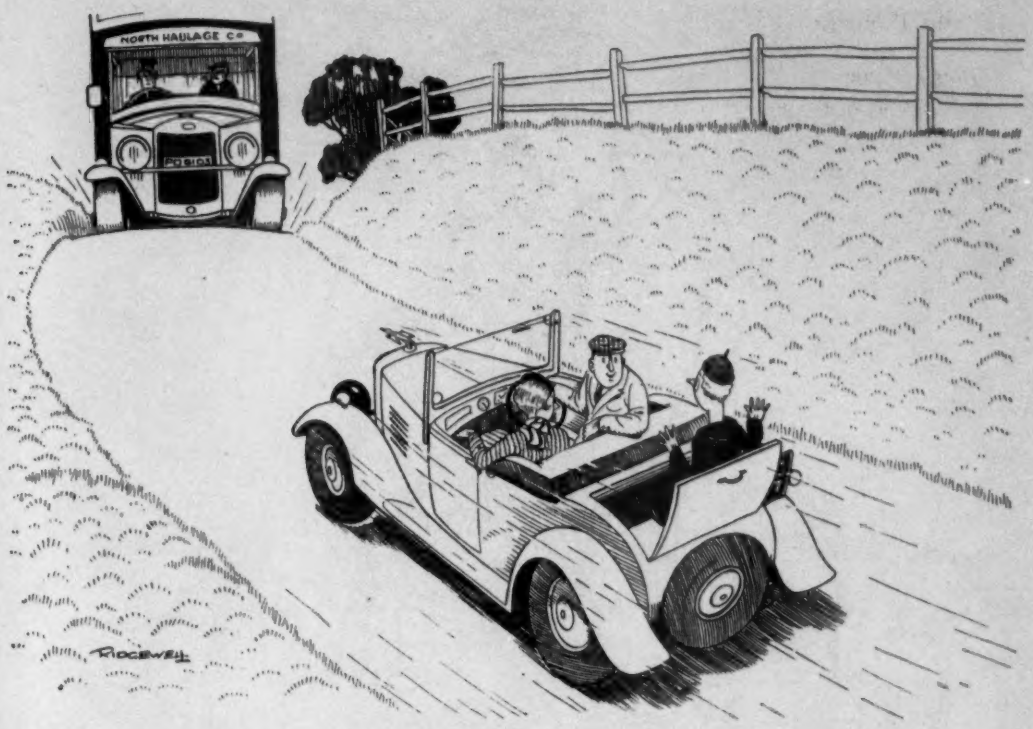
LOOKING FOR HIS GIRL

Pierre . . . . . ROBERT FLEMYNG

kiss, they are both, struggling, under arrest.

In *Harmony Parade* the frivolous-minded will find a great deal of what they want: they will find pretty girls, tuneful songs (those of the male quartet very cleverly written), dances, jokes and football. I admit that the football is of the American variety, dangerous to limb and life and also very difficult to comprehend; but the mere fact that the game is played at all is, for most English people, who seem to be hypnotised by the spectacle, probably enough. At any rate, I notice that a section of a football match is a consistent feature of "News" programmes, and, although these items not only always bore me but always look the same, it must be assumed that they are included to gratify a frantic public demand. The whole *motif* of *Harmony Parade* is, I might have stated, football, and the preparation of an obscure team in order to make it fit to meet a famous one. Need I say that the obscure team wins? Of course I needn't.

Although there are, in this film, more songs than I like—there is even one at half-time on the football-ground—it has the conspicuous advantage of introducing a hick who can



"I'M AFRAID YOU'RE NOT VERY HAPPY IN THAT BACK SEAT, MISS CARRUTHERS."

throw, accurately, a melon an immense distance, but must take off his boots and socks to do so. In these days when proficiency in the ladylike pastime of darts is all about us, it is thrilling to see, even on the screen, this rugged and heroic performer at work, and to follow the trajectory first of the melons and later of the footballs.

The film is also notable for giving rein to the sarcastic humour of PATSY KELLY, an American actress who is new to me and very bracing.

E. V. L.

My London Garden

March 12th.—How love of tender growing things makes life rich and full! Have removed the bowls of bulbs planted last September from the sitting-room to the spare-room. On sunny days the spare-room has five minutes' more sun than any other room in the flat. Who would deny that extra five minutes' sunshine to nursling bulbs?

Have bought quantities of daffodils and narcissi from Peabody to brighten sitting-room now that bowls of bulbs are no longer there. Have also bought bowl containing four blue hyacinths in flower. Only three shillings, and smell heavenly, in dull gold bowl shading to black. Peabody agrees that the bowl will be a picture filled with yellow crocuses next spring. Mrs. Carruthers (on the ground-floor) has moved her bowl of tulips planted last September from the sitting-room window and substituted a bowl of Peabody's daffodils. Mrs. Carruthers finds there is more sun in the spare-room. She maintains that buying from Peabody bowls of bulbs in flower is not and cannot be the same thing as growing them oneself, and does not and cannot provide the same interest and pleasure.

Devon

(*Tribute of a Foreigner*)

I DIDN'T think I'd like it
When first I came along;
Too many trippers strike it,
Too many hikers hike it,
Too many make a song
And dance about their Devon;
Too oft it's rhymed with "heaven."
I thought I wouldn't like it.
I said so. I was wrong.

I don't know how it caught me
Or just exactly when,
But day on day it brought me
Fresh treasures till it taught me
At last to think again.
I called it over-rated;
It showed itself—and waited;
And one fine day it caught me
As fast as better men.

It showed its secret places,
Delicious and apart,
Its coves and combes and chases,
Lost lanes and sky-roofed spaces
And all its pixy art;
I never felt the hooking,
But when I wasn't looking
Into its secret places
It drew away my heart.

I've lived my time in Devon
And now that time is done;
Seventy times and seven
I'll hear it rhymed with "heaven"
And cavil enter none.
It hides its best behind it,
But seek and you shall find it. . . .
I've loved my time in Devon;
I fell for it; it won.

H. B.



New Errand-Boy. "MISTER, WOT'S THE NUMBER OF THIS 'OUSE?"

Glorious Spring?

THE professional poet can pretty well go it,
Provided his theme is the Spring,
For he feels it his duty to point out the beauty
Of Nature enjoying her fling.
He'll probably focus a verse on the crocus,
Include a few lines on the thrush,
Light-heartedly feature the newly-born creature
And talk of the country as "lush";
But, between you and me, I feel sure that his piece
Is written in sunshine at Monte or Nice—

For Spring in this island is perfectly foul,
A season for bitter complaining;
The best-behaved children do nothing but howl,
And it always appears to be raining;
And when it's not raining the wind's in the east,
You huddle in corners and shiver,
And before the thing's through you're in bed with the flu
Or a terrible chill on the liver.
So down with the poets who blissfully sing
The traditional beauties of glorious Spring!

These misinformed writers (to hell with the blighters!)
Declare it's the season for love;
In a masterly fashion they touch on the passion
In terms of the stars up above;
But I doubt if a fellow—not even *Othello*—
Could summon the strength to propose,
Or give a selection much thought or affection
Whose eyes are less blue than her nose!
In fact it appears in affairs of the heart
That Nature has nothing in common with Art—

For Spring in this island is bitterly cold,
A time for perpetual sneezing,
A season repellent to young and to old,
When feet and emotions are freezing.
And when, later on, you decide to discard
What appears a dispensable "undie,"
I'm willing to bet that your radio-set
Says "Snow is expected on Monday."
So away with the poets' descriptions of Spring!
You can take it from me that they don't mean a thing.



TO LOVERS OF SPAIN

WHEREVER THE GUILT MAY LIE, *THESE* AT LEAST HAVE DONE NO WRONG.

[The General Relief Fund for Distressed Women and Children in Spain was formed last December, under the patronage of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Archbishop of Westminster, the Chief Rabbi, and the leaders of the Free Churches, and the Church of Scotland. It is strictly non-political and absolutely impartial. Its purpose is to send out, in association with the British Red Cross and other Societies, supplies of food, clothing and medicines wherever they are most badly needed. The first consignments have already been shipped, and distributed at Salamanca and Malaga. Donations and gifts in kind, to help the thousands of innocent victims of this terrible Civil War, should be sent to "The General Relief Fund," 35, Weymouth Street, W.1.]

Impressions of Parliament

Synopsis of the Week

***Monday, March 8th.*—Commons: Debate on Procedure.**

***Tuesday, March 9th.*—Lords: Shipping Subsidy and Merchant Shipping Bills given Second Reading.**



The Plymouth Rock. "NOBODY IS GOING TO FATHER THAT CANARD ON ME!"
MR. HORE-BELISHA

Commons: Money Resolution of Special Areas Bill debated.

***Wednesday, March 10th.*—Lords: Merchant Shipping (Spanish Frontiers Observation) Bill given Second Reading.**

Commons: Debate on Transport. Caledonian Power Bill rejected.

Monday, March 8th.—When Commander FLETCHER asked about reports that the Italian massacre of Abyssinians after the attempt on Marshal GRAZIANI'S life at Addis Ababa was the worst committed in Africa since the Congo atrocities, Lord CRANBORNE regretted that information received by the Foreign Office partially bore this out.

The gayest scenes were called up by Sir REGINALD CLARRY'S request that Members should be provided with a room in the House where they could make a personal bow in the keep-fit campaign—scenes where the CHANCELLOR went through the vaults and made sure of his balance, Mr. EDEN drilled his more unpractised colleagues on the trapeze in the rudiments of collective security, Sir THOMAS INSKIP did his best to co-ordinate his arms, Mr. CHURCHILL swung the Indian clubs till he was giddy, Mr. HORE-BELISHA was frequently put through the hoop, the LLOYD GEORGES played strenuous "Follow My Leader," and Sir ARTHUR SALTER learned the ropes—but scenes, alas! which are to be denied life except in the imagination, for Mr. HUDSON regretted that no accommodation could be spared. What a shame!

After Mr. HORE-BELISHA had pleaded guilty to much milder intentions as regards car-parking than most of the Press had attributed to him, the House, on Mr. ATTLEE'S motion, debated the problem raised by the drafting of the Money Resolution of the Special Areas Bill. This had to be passed or rejected as it stood, a procedure to which ordinarily there would be no objection, since it saves time; but Mr. ATTLEE and subsequent speakers pointed out that by referring not only to the money but also to the ways in which it would be spent the Government was hopelessly limiting the function of the House to amend the Bill itself in Committee.

Anxiety at what seemed a loss of Parliamentary rights was not confined to the Opposition; Mr. BALDWIN was sympathetic; and finally the ATTORNEY-GENERAL announced that the Government was willing to set up a further inquiry into the working of the relevant Standing Order.

Tuesday, March 9th.—The Shipping Subsidy Bill received warm support this afternoon in the Lords from an owner, Lord ESSENDON, who said that, while the subsidy had already justified itself, the economic conditions on which it was based had scarcely altered. Six months of prosperity did not compensate for six years of ruinous depreciation, and in the event of war our reduced tonnage would make us more dependent on neutral shipping than we had been in 1914. Lord LLOYD criticised Parliament's complacency in this matter, but Lord MUNSTER was able to comfort him a little with the news that the Imperial Shipping Committee was at that moment looking into the position of British shipping in the Far East.



MARCH WINDS
MR. ERNEST BROWN MANAGES TO MAINTAIN HIS EQUILIBRIUM IN SPITE OF A SEVERE BUFFETING.



A SCOTTISH LAMENT
"If it were refused a second reading it would be a tragedy for Scotland."—*Mr. Boothby on the Caledonian Power Bill.*

After Mr. CHAMBERLAIN had announced that a Tribunal consisting of Lord Justice GREENE, Mr. Justice CLAUSON and Lord PLENDER had been appointed to determine what sum would be fair compensation for the coal-owners in return for the nationalisation of royalties, and Mr. PERKINS had momentarily brightened the House by suggesting that with a little more flooding Gatwick Airport would make an excellent terminal air-base for the new flying-boats, the Commons returned to the Special Areas Bill, and Mr. ERNEST BROWN indomitably explained its objects in the face of Opposition barracking which, though most determined, was frowned on by the Socialist leaders, who had prepared their speeches and wished to get



UNSUCCESSFUL COMEDIAN FINDS CONSOLATION IN THE ZOO

on with the debate. It was a childish scene, yet it was easy to sympathise with the feeling that in view of its somewhat uncertain record in the Special Areas the Government had no right to render any of its administrative proposals immune from amendment, and that in the circumstances debate was a formal waste of breath.

Mr. BROWN's speech was mainly an enlargement on the White Paper. Its chief critic was Mr. DALTON, who demanded a Special Areas Minister with wide powers of dictation.

Wednesday, March 10th.—As Chairman of the Non-Intervention Committee, Lord PLYMOUTH has earned the greatest praise for his achievement in bringing the Committee to agreement—a formidable test of patience. This afternoon he explained to the Lords the objects of the Merchant Shipping (Spanish Frontiers Observation) Bill, which is the outcome of that agreement; the main provisions are that ships proceeding to Spain must first call at a non-Spanish port to embark observing officers, who will have no executive powers whatever but will watch the unloading of cargo and the landing of passengers and report any breaches of the Non-Intervention Agreement. Lord MERSEY and Lord STRABOLGI promised the support of the Liberal and Socialist parties.

The Vote for the Ministry of Transport showed the House sympathetic to the active policy of trial and error which is being pursued, and gave Mr. HORE-BELISHA an opportunity to make a statement. He pointed out that with road-traffic increasing to the fantastic tune of between four hundred and five hundred new cars a day he felt that the best service he could render to the motorist was to give him free passage through the streets, and that was why the question of curtailing parking was being reviewed. He hoped that the survey which was being made of the transport needs of London would be imitated by authorities in other cities; and he was able to tell the House that since 1935 the number of accidents in relation to the number of vehicles had been falling. The figures are still ghastly, but at least they represent a positive victory for the safety campaign.

The Caledonian Power Bill, which gave permission to a private company to harness water-power at Corpach in the Highlands in order to manufacture calcium carbide, which at present this country imports in large quantities from Norway, was rejected, the main argument against it being that the factory would be more useful in South Wales; but Mr. BOOTHBY and Lord CLYDESDALE pleaded eloquently that the Highlands should be recognised as a distressed area.



OUR BACK-BENCH *WHO'S WHO*

Captain RAMSAY will never agree
That the B.B.C.
Is not seditious *and* a
Hotbed of Bolshy propaganda.

Warning to Shipping

It was in late October last year that Christopher and I made our historic cruise in the M.V. *Lady Ermyntrude*, and as there are not many people who find pleasure in navigating the Norfolk Broads in the blinding rainstorms of winter, it is safe to assume that the first people to take her out in the season that will now soon be starting will be the first people to occupy *Lady Ermyntrude* since we vacated her.

It is for them that this warning is intended.

The skipper (Christopher) had been thoughtless enough to take, not his little daughter, but his little son to bear him company. Much might be written about the endless mischief got into by this cheery little fellow, but such memories are quite painful enough without being committed to paper.

We usually found it necessary to seal the cabin hermetically at night against the ravages of mosquitoes. Christopher at first protested against this on the grounds that he was unable to sleep without plenty of fresh air; but a providential gnat gave a party on his left eye on our first night out, and after that there was no further objection.

The result was to raise a glorious fug in the cabin. Every now and then Christopher would say, "Good Lord, what an atmosphere!" and light another pipeful of his filthy tobacco as a prophylactic against germs; but at any rate it kept the mosquitoes away. It also kept Christopher junior happy for hours at a time drawing pictures in the steam on the windows.

No one paid any attention to this recreation of his until one evening we noticed that the pictures were appearing of their own volition when Christopher junior was nowhere near. One moment there was a perfectly clear window; the next there was a sheet of mist with a strange heraldic device imprinted on it, bearing underneath the explanatory legend, "Daddy."

"That's rather interesting," said Christopher, looking up from his labour of writing up the log.

"I think it shows a definite talent for portraiture," I agreed.

"I mean," Christopher said coldly, "it's interesting that the—er—the scribbles should appear again like that after they've once faded."

I'm afraid I've been rather a long time coming to the point. What I want to tell the next lessees of *Lady Ermyntrude* is this: That if perchance they should be sitting in the cabin one evening and should observe the words, *Mene, mene, tekel upharsin* appear on the window as if written by a ghostly finger, there will be no cause for alarm. They will not be the victims of an angelic protest against their behaviour; they will merely be the victims of Christopher's morbid sense of fun.

Funks' Forum

In the Daily Press you may
Notice letters from "Fair Play,"
"Sportsman," "Churchman" and
"True Blue,"
Telling others what to do.
Seeking praise but fearing blame,
Each takes care to mask his name.
He who writes and runs away
Lives to write another day.

(This has come from "A. N. Other,"
Rise, you funks, and hail a brother!)



"Heard of anyone called Barchester-Cholmondely-Smythe here? Swine wears a tie."

At the Play

"Great Possessions"
(Duke of York's)

Great Possessions, at the Duke of York's Theatre, is a play by a young dramatist which gives great opportunities to several young actors. The story is very competently handled and avoids the obvious pitfalls of an attempt to portray the effect of a violent evangelical conversion on a young man of wealth and lineage. It never falls into crudeness or ranting or irreverence. The young man, *Gerald*, younger son of the *Earl of Stormont*, has just been converted, on the eve of his twenty-first birthday, when the curtain rises. What we witness is not conversion but the reception given to conversion by the unconverted.

Gerald Sinclair is played by Mr. Geoffrey Keen, who shows us a young man of attractive manner and eager simplicity; but if we pause to separate what the character says and does from the very agreeable way Mr. Keen acts the part we at once realise how much boorish inconsiderateness there is in what *Gerald Sinclair* does. But he is a very young man, and the energy of decision which makes him divest himself of his possessions is accompanied by a sharp intolerance for his parents.

There is much observation here, and indeed the whole play is remarkably mature. The *Earl* in particular is admirably drawn. Mr. Nigel Clarke plays him easily, but the dramatist deserves equal credit for as convincing a middle-aged peer of the country sort as anyone could wish to meet.

It is only of recent years that the Group movement has arisen in the Universities to provide topicality for a play of this kind. But in its essence the story could be placed in any period, and much of this play is curiously Edwardian, recalling, for example, the novels of Robert Hugh Benson, who dealt more than once with the complications in the smooth social scene of English upper-class life caused by sudden conversions on the part of the young scions of established homes.

Gerald Sinclair's elder brother, *Charles, Lord Weston* (Mr. Tully Comber) is magnificently representative of a type which grows numerically scarcer with every decade that passes. His friend, *Henry Longworth* (Mr. Arthur Powell), is cunningly drawn, with his desire that everything shall be easy and pleasant and his anxiety to adapt himself to social requirements. The fourth *Undergraduate* plays an important part in the play, and Mr. Hubert Gregg is first-rate as *Frederick Hackett*, the friend of *Gerald Sinclair*.



GREAT POSSESSIONS

Hon. Gerald Sinclair . . . Mr. Geoffrey Keen

The last Act, concerned with the difficulties of that idealistic work in the East-End which attracts many undergraduates on going down, takes place some ten months after the earlier Acts. The dramatist has seen how long a period ten months is in early life and how much change new experiences make; but the task has remained for Mr. Gregg to show us the same man before and after he has learned a great deal. The difference is very subtly and firmly brought out and crowns a very distinguished piece of acting.

Like the family butler, *Horton*, women keep the background of this play. *Mrs. Bates*, the Oxford landlady (Miss Jane Savile), is matched in the Second Act by the *Countess of Stormont* (Miss Marjory Clark). Each is a type with a *rôle* to fulfil, and only the last of the three female characters, *Miss Cynthia Roberts* (Miss Jane Welsh), is allowed to seize hold firmly of the plot and give it a decisive turn. She saves it from an unnecessarily dangerous touch of melodrama at the end, and though the final curtain falls with some important questions unresolved, it needs no great exercise of the imagination to feel that they can be and are solved.



THE BOY WHO WOULDN'T GO HOME

Hon. Gerald Sinclair . . . . Mr. Geoffrey Keen
The Earl of Stormont . . . . Mr. Nigel Clarke
Frederick Hackett . . . . . Mr. Hubert Gregg

As a class, undergraduates have a way of entering and leaving rooms suddenly with an immense air of purposefulness and pressing business, and this social habit is duly observed by Mr. Douglas Home. He uses it legitimately as dramatist's prey, for it is a habit which makes it very much easier to build up dramatic action in a room in an Oxford lodging-house.

D. W.

"Night Alone" (Daly's)

This play leaves me convinced that it is not enough for luxury hotels to burgeon with ultra-violet lounges and mud-grottoes and squash-courts as selling-points additional to the now hackneyed claims of a bath to every bed. An amenity of far greater importance is still omitted: a night kindergarten, under the direction of a competent matron, where husbands whom marriage has rendered unfit to seek their own amusements could be safely parked by anxious wives called unavoidably away. The cost of this provision would be a mere trifle, for a few sets of dominoes and a bar flowing with nice orange-drinks would be enough to keep the little fellows happy, while the saving in painful fluttering of many innocent hearts, it seems, would be immense.

For *Charles Seaton* (Mr. Richard Bird), who was a partner in one of those marriages which the world is bound to call happy though it cannot but regret the transformation of two presentable human beings, socially-speaking, into vegetables, no such refuge offered. Six years of splendid isolation with *Barbara* (Miss Helen Horsey) had caused him to forget, if indeed he had ever known, the innumerable ways of spending an exciting evening which London holds out to anyone with a grain of adventure and a few shillings; and when, to their mutual misery, she had to leave him alone for one of the nights of a holiday, they were both asking a good deal of a depleted bottle of brandy and a crossword-puzzle in expecting these to retain him securely in an hotel sitting-room until sleep should supervene. As *Barbara's* nasty Freudian-minded sister prophesied, these did in fact lose their fascination pretty quickly; and rather to his surprise than his delight he found himself taking part in the tepid jollity of a night-club with an acquaintance from his home town and two young ladies whose intentions were evident.

In due course, having consumed some doctored and excessively expensive whisky, he awoke in a strange flat, alone except for two detectives, who squirted him with soda-water and refused to believe that a large suit-case full of cocaine was not his. Equally incredulous was the *Superintendent* at the police-station, until at last convinced by *Charles's* wild anxiety to get back first to the hotel and so save *Barbara's* feelings; an ambition actually achieved by a split second, the curtain obscuring a reunion so demonstrative that it would have passed as warm even after a return from the Antipodes.



DIGNITY AND INNOCENCE

Superintendent . . . . Mr. John Turnbull
Charles Seaton . . . . Mr. Richard Bird

This little comedy is of no great consequence, but it has an attractive flavour which should ensure a successful run. Mr. Jeffrey Dell's dialogue is neat, his situations natural, and the



BACK TO NORMAL

Barbara Seaton . . Miss Helen Horsey
Charles Seaton . . Mr. Richard Bird

vital part of *Charles* might well have been written for Mr. Bird, so admirably does he fill it out with significance and keep it balanced between the sympathetic and the ridiculous. He is especially good at the end of the First Act, when, after *Barbara* has left, he is alone on the stage for some minutes and goes through a brilliant passage of dumb-show, which is in effect a comic-strip on the subject of the over-domesticated man marooned.

Miss Horsey's *Barbara*, quick with thermometer and slow with thought, fits snugly into the picture; Miss Margot Landa's *Gloria*, whose ease of virtue is accompanied by a sense of humour and a heart well-placed, is firmly done; and of several other sound performances the best is Mr. John Turnbull's delightful *Superintendent*.

Eric.

"The Revenger's Tragedy" (Marlowe Society)

"Corpses to right of them, corpses to left of them," sums up this year's production by the Marlowe Society and the A.D.C. in Cambridge. "A heavy season" but an admirably managed one, for on a simple set which delighted the eye the producer succeeded in producing Tourneur's play with just that touch of humour which kept the audience from merely gloating on the murderous orgies of a melodrama. *Supervacuo*, excellently played, provided a striking contrast to his brother, *Ambitioso*, and the producer took every advantage of the comic relief that they afford.

The setting was in the Elizabethan tradition, with gallery, alcove, apron and a generous flight of steps; and the producer made full use of all these except the steps. By keeping the same set throughout and by having no break between the scenes this rather lengthy play assumed a unity which would have been impossible had it been split into its twenty separate scenes.

In spite of speedy action, however, the production lacked something essential to Tourneur, and the cast could not wholly overcome the modern atmosphere. The fault was perhaps more in audience than in players, for while we can silently watch innumerable gangsters "bumped off" on the screen, the sight of many murders on the stage is too often mirth-provoking. *The Revenger's Tragedy* may be Grand Guignol gilded by poetry, but the modern sophisticated undergraduate cannot appreciate even the gilt. The difficulty of preserving equanimity in the face of frequent and unnecessary laughter was at times almost too much for the cast, and had a tendency to estrange the actor from his part.

Doggerel's Dictionary

III.

BEES.—*See* ANTS. In fact, when referred to the bee, by Dr. ISAAC WATTS or anybody else, it will always pay you to go and look at an ant instead. They are both social insects with substantially the same message for you, but the ant's normal world is only two-dimensional and you can collect its message without getting stung. The bee's world is just as three-dimensional as yours is and you can't collect anything at all from it without getting stung. Exceptions to this rule are either great friends of the bees or enveloped in gauze.

BEET, SUGAR.—Since I have very little to say about Sugar Beet except that I have been in cars that have been delayed by lorries full of it and trains that have been delayed by trucks full of it, this seems to be the place to introduce the remarks about Baths which I omitted because I was in a hurry to get to Beer. Some of my very finest ideas have come to me, and left me again, while I have been in the bath. In the bath also I have done all my best singing, whistling, bubble-blowing, and navigation of celluloid ducks. Maybe if I took up celluloid ducks again—for many years mine have been rusting in the attic along with the old elephant-guns and the put-and-take top—I should be less bothered in the bath by ideas which I had no immediate means of recording. Or possibly it would be worth my while to fix up a microphone and connect it to some recording apparatus in another room out of the steam; no doubt that is the sort of device that some American big-business men use. But then America, where there are 16·49 bath-rooms (or, as the more cultured of us say, bathra) per head of the population, is a special case.

BEETHOVEN.—Another reason for dealing with Baths just before BEETHOVEN is that BEETHOVEN is what I frequently whistle in the Bath. "I whistle BEETHOVEN" sounds, I admit, a bit surrealistic, but on the whole it gives a more accurate impression of what goes on than would such a statement as "I whistle compositions by BEETHOVEN." I can't be said to whistle compositions by BEETHOVEN any more really than the overflow pipe (which also whistles from time to time). However, impartial judges of any contest between me and the overflow pipe would have to allow that my whistling is the more reminiscent of BEETHOVEN. This is no reflection on the overflow pipe, which is no doubt far better at draining away bath-water than I should be. Fair's fair, and we can't all be as versatile as LEONARDO DA VINCI.

I don't wish to imply that I whistle BEETHOVEN exclusively. He gets a look in, like a lot of other people (for instance, DUKE ELLINGTON, IRVING BERLIN, CÉSAR FRANCK, LAUREL and HARDY, BACH, and whoever wrote that thing that goes *tum, t*—oh, well, we'll leave that one alone). He used to get a look in with nearly the whole of the *Kreutzer Sonata*, but now it's usually something short, simple and emphatic, like the Ode to Joy in the Ninth Symphony which can be repeated *ad lib.* with variations. You ought to hear some of my variations on BEETHOVEN. Some people who hear them go away impressed. Some go away thunderstruck. Others just go away.

BEETLE.—This is the third species of insect to appear in this manuscript. Maybe they come up through the waste-pipe of the bath. *See* ANTS. *See* BEES. Or perhaps it would help to see a plumber.

BEGGARS.—Like most other people I pretend I have a system of giving to beggars. I give to the obviously deserving, because they are obviously deserving, and to the obviously undeserving, because they must have some darn good reason. That's my system. However, I know very well that when I give a beggar anything I am not really influenced by any other fact than that I happen to feel like getting rid of twopence. Some people look on charity as a kind of gamble: they go round backing beggars as if they were horses in the belief that if they back the right one they'll go to heaven, or be left the five thousand pounds the beggar has sewn in the lining of his cap, or get on good terms with the lower orders and be overlooked when the revolution comes. Not me. I do it when I find myself jingling too much.

BENEVOLENCE.—Nothing of the kind; *see* above, BEGGARS. I once gave a bus-conductor a cigar which had been given to me; I felt momentarily benevolent when I saw how pleased he was, but really my motive was self-preservation. I got off the bus before *he* ceased to feel benevolent (*i.e.*, before he lit the cigar).

BITTERN.—I have always had an* ambition to write a poem about a bittern. I have various odd lines and verses lying about, of which this, the first stanza of a Lament, somewhat derivative and old-fashioned in form, is one of the odder:—

Down where the bitterns wing their weary way
Across the marshy flat lands, there to boom,
We felt a sudden quiver, so to say,
And heard a distant call foreboding doom;
For Mrs. Whittingbath had fallen, fallen
Into the sticky places of the marsh. . . .
Our pilot heard the splarsh.



BUT DASH IT ALL MY DEAR CHAP, WE CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT BEAUTY

*There is a word crossed out here which looks as if it was "ambittern"; I assure you this is a fact. In view of the rest of this paragraph I suppose we ought to be thankful it *is* crossed out.—R. M.

The narrator is in an aeroplane, you understand. I never continued this because Mrs. Whittingbath seemed to be running away with the story and I was more interested in the bitterns. I introduce it now, as you may have guessed—though if you have, what you are doing still hanging round in the danger-zone I can't imagine—in order to give myself an excuse for saying "Half a loaf is bittern no bread."

Of course it all depends on what you use bread for. R. M.

The Social Whirl

Earl Scorte is quite the most charming peer I know who paints with his feet. An exhibition of his works which I attended yesterday (aptly entitled *Pieds de Résistance*) attracted more smart people than I have ever seen before in any one gallery. I recognised the Massacre of Glencoe, who was one of the first to buy a painting. Later he decided to dispose of it to the Marquess of Nether Wallop, who has quite a flair for collecting and, it has been whispered, owns a priceless collection of Winterhalters. His mother-in-law, wonderful Lady Beagle, has quite recovered from her recent hunting accident.

* * *

Fourteen "Toppers"

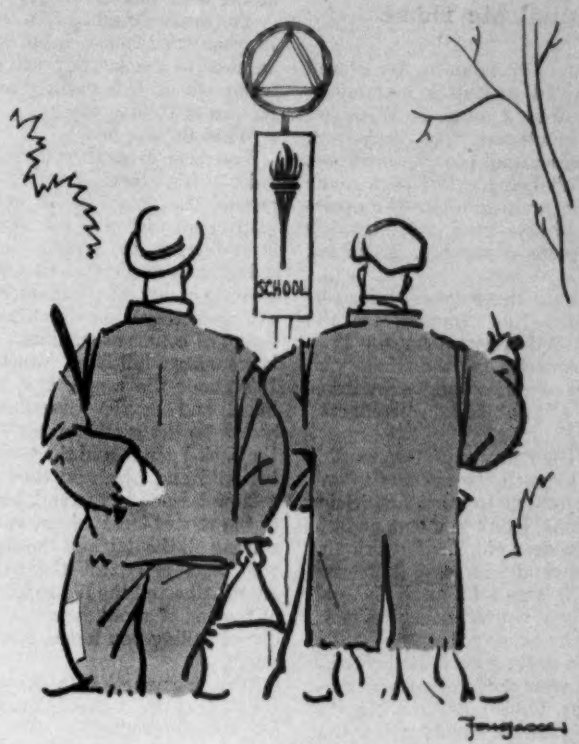
"I object to the lower classes," remarked young Lord Gravel and Grit to me the other day at the Savoy Grill, "on principle." A popular Etonian, he has a reputation for wit. Once, when on Long Leave, he climbed almost to the top of Boston Stump. "I was saved from falling," he admitted, "by a workman repairing the stone-work. I ruined a 'topper,' however," he added ruefully.

Fortunately he had thirteen others.

* * *

Coals to Newcastle

Lord Gravel and Grit was not the only witty person I met yesterday. In the stalls of the Adelphi I discovered Mr. Jeroboam. A regular first-nighter, his friends chaff him because, though he lacks a title, he owns a cellar which would put almost any peer to shame. "I used to live in Cork Street," he told me, and added with a smile—"and once spent a night in Vine Street." Now he is living in Tite Street, Chelsea. Once an unwise friend sent him a case of champagne. *That man is now on Mr. Jeroboam's black list.*



"Well, it never torch you and me much."

The Stranger

Dame Edith Cowl, who contrives to look younger every day, has just published her *Retrospections, Recollections and Reflexions.* The volume is dedicated to herself. "And why not?" she said to me the other day; "I wrote it, didn't I?—at least, most of it." She has some good stories to tell of all sorts of celebrities.

Once, when she was a little girl of nine spending a holiday at Cowes, a man and a dog passed her on the beach. Edith threw a pebble which grazed the dog's leg. "That must you not do," said the stranger sternly. *It was none other than the Prince Consort!*

* * *

An Unfortunate Occasion

I rarely venture further east than the Haymarket, but the other day I found myself in the Strand and bumped into a well-known headmaster of a famous public school emerging from a tavern—naturally one of the best taverns. He told me that quite recently he had engaged as an assistant English master a young man with somewhat "advanced" ideas. Instead of being instructed to learn by heart the poems of Wordsworth, Coleridge and Tennyson, the boys, to their great surprise, were set to learn the works of Eliot, Auden, Spender and one or two of the young poets favoured by Miss Edith Sitwell.

A few days ago the boys' parents were invited to the annual Founder's Day celebrations, and the headmaster in all innocence invited one of his pupils to recite a poem for the benefit of the guests. *The effect was as surprising as it was disconcerting.* A circular letter of regret has since been sent, I understand, to all those who were present.

Hints to Young Oarsmen

For rowing men who want a Blue
A most important job is
To find out who will coach the crew
And study all their hobbies.
Such knowledge properly applied
May well decide your fate,
And to some little skill allied
Should get you in the eight.

Callin' Me Home

You wanna go home to Dixie, and you've an old coal-black mammy in Kentucky, and a home in Wyomin', and a lil sweetheart 'way, 'way back in the Rockies, and now, beshrew me, if you aren't being called back home to the wide prair-ee where the dogies (whom I always spell with two *g*'s myself) wander all the day. This must stop.

England for the English, for goodness' sake. Not America for the Americans and America for the English, and America for the whole vast civilisation comprised under the terms "jazzers," "hill-billies," "crooners" and "fans."

After all—or anyway after reading this—ask yourself the question: Can't we do something towards anglicizing this business? Don't you ever want to go home to dear old Bedfordshire, or to see somebody in, say, Polperro? Naturally it won't be anybody coal-black—unless you're going to make it one of the mining districts—but it could be an ordinary coloured relation—perhaps your aunt, or, if you must have colour, Cousin Beatrice the day after that extraordinary blue rinse that she gives her hair whenever she has it shampooed.

And then Home, Sweet Home. One realises that Wyomin' is rather unusually convenient as a rhyme, but don't tell me that there isn't any place anywhere in the British Isles that can serve the same purpose. If the worst comes to the worst we can be Scottish, and want to go hame, to the dear wee village of Thame.

Sweethearts, beyond a doubt, can live anywhere. It doesn't have to be the Rockies. You can have a sweetheart 'way, 'way back in East Oxfordshire, or St. Neots, or at a frightfully good place called King's Somborne in Hampshire. You can, if you're a sailor, have one in every port. Quite a good line and a thoroughly English one—which is, after all, what we're trying to get at—would be, instead of "Little Sweetheart of the Rockies," "Little Sweetheart of the Mumbles," or "The Pantiles," or even at a pinch "The Isle of Dogs." Anything like that—full of local colour.

The prairie, the dogies, the ranch and/or range are rather more difficult to manage. But *not by any means impossible*. If they can't possibly be anglicized they can be, as psychologists say, resolved. Or we can, which should come to the same thing in the end.

Tackle the whole thing slowly and at the same time thoroughly.

You are in a teashop, at a restaurant, in your own house listening to the wireless, at a revue, or practically anywhere else in this country except the Houses of Parliament.

What do you hear?

You hear a nasal yearning kind of voice, with a sort of twanging background that may be an anonymous instrument with only one string, or an accordion, or just a plain piano.

Instantly you realise that somebody wearing a knotted handkerchief and a large peculiar hat with a high crown—and of course other things as well—is crooning a hill-billy. Just for fun. It's about the range, and old Uncle Silas, and maybe Grandma in the rocker on the front- (or, alternatively, the back-) porch, and the horses roaming wild and free, and then probably getting lassoed in the end, but it's all in the way of local colour, and the sun shining all the day and the stars doing the same thing all the night, and Auntie Sue and the little children, and at the end of about every six lines the dogies calling you home, home to the range.

Well, our reaction to this summons is just that it's *definitely* too far to go, dogies or no dogies.

We must be called home to some much nearer and more accessible place, and above all we must be called home in plain English to an ordinary English establishment.

It can be done.

The singer, to start with, had better just wear a plain collar and tie and a bowler-hat. (Local colour at once established.) Naturally, he won't be calling you back to the range—where you haven't ever been in your life, and which anyway doesn't exist in this country—but, in a much more natural manner, to your own suburb:—

"An' I wander the city, and I only know I'm feelin'
That I'm bound to turn my footsteps back home again to Ealin'."

Or with equal felicity you could quit your shootin' (remember that you'll have to be a bit careful here about the dates—the twelfth of August and all that) and hit the long trail home to Tootin'.

For old Uncle Silas substitute Aunt Mary. Naturally you will see to it that she isn't hoeing sweet potatoes or sailing the rapids or indulging in any other form of activity incompatible with the English scene. Aunt Mary can be over-calling the Vicar at a quiet game of contract, or cutting out a new blouse on a corner of the dining-room table, or doing almost any little characteristic thing of that kind.

Grandma, definitely, won't be in any rocker on any porch. She'll be having a facial at Ye Olde English Rosebud Beauty Shoppe in the High Street. You'll have to put that in as best you can, and it's just bad luck that the first rhyme that suggests itself for "wrinkle" should be "winkle."

Something, however, can be done with—

"Massage for each familiar wrinkle
And white hair going all a-crinkle,"

after a permanent wave.

(And if that doesn't call you home, what will?)

We can't of course have the sun shining all the day. That would be unjust to our English climate. Have the east wind blowing, or the rain coming down in torrents, or the fog getting into everything in the extraordinary way that it does.

Cut out Auntie Sue and the children altogether. We've had one aunt already, and the children with any luck are at school.

And you can't be called home by the dogies, not even if we turn them into decent sporting-dogs. It's out of the question. The English may be silly about animals, but not to that extent. It's for us to call them, not them to call us.

No. Just stop and think for a minute. What really calls you home when you get away for more than about five minutes? Yes, I thought you'd get it.



"NOW, POLLY, YOU KNOW YOU CAN. SAY 'NINETY-NINE.'"



"I'VE WORKED FOR ALL SORTS IN ME TIME—GOOD-LOOKING *AND* PLAIN—AND THE HANDSOME ONES IS THE WORST. NOW I COULD WORK ME FINGERS TO THE BONE FOR YOU TWO LADIES."

So the whole thing, with the venue moved right away from the Rockies and the Arizona mountains and all the rest of them, is held together by a refrain something like this:—

"And though from 'Mon Abri' and Clapham I roam,
The state of my balance will still call me home.
Home! Home!
My overdraft calls me back home."

You see what I mean?

Realism combined with patriotism just callin' you home. E. M. D.

Moments Musicales

A FRIEND said to CHOPIN
"It would be topin
If only yude
Write an étude."

Herr RICHARD STRAUSS
Had holes in his winter drauss,
So, to pay for another pair,
He wrote *Rosenkavalier*.

When SCHUBERT wrote a symphony
People thought hymphony,
So his interest diminished
And he left it unfinished. M. H.

Motorists, Please

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE HOSPITAL is appealing to motorists and motor-cyclists to dump all their old and worn-out tyres at the U.C.H. depôt in Torrington Square, W.C.1.

The proceeds from this source will be devoted to the Infant Welfare Building Extensions.

Still the Better Half

"A Lady about 30–35 required as part companion to an elderly couple (mostly lady)."—*Advt. in Daily Paper.*



Loyal Supporter. "ON THE CONTRARY, CUTHBERT, I AM ENJOYING THE STROLL, AND ONLY WISH I COULD THINK YOU WERE."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Pomp and Circumstance

WHEN GORDON fell at Khartoum a leader-writer in *The Times* voiced the righteous national indignation; when the massacre of Cawnpore was news, *The Times* was ready with the unexceptionable words that every man could make his own; even when NELSON was killed at Trafalgar *The Times* was already prepared to provide the language of decent appropriate sorrow. In a long series of leading articles which it must have given him great delight to select, Sir JAMES MARCHANT outlines more than a century of history—*History Through "The Times"* (CASSELL, 8/6). The style of the articles, except for the trend away from literary exuberance, has altered astonishingly little, while the necessity for someone in authority solemnly to say the expected thing has not changed at all. As for the opinions advanced, though few persons to-day refer to voting by ballot as a "hazardous and degrading experiment," it is still true that income-tax should not be endured one hour longer than may be absolutely necessary. The genuine awe aroused by the first sight of the Crystal Palace and the rejoicing over Waterloo Bridge have special significance at the moment, while the carefully guarded approval of the Suez Canal, "if it can at all be kept open," or of M. BLERIOT'S aeroplane, "remarkable for the smallness of its size," afford joyful relief in a portentous world.

A Novelist Looks Back

"Organisation of life means more to the Englishman than its contents," is Mr. NIKOLAI GUBSKY'S conclusion after living critically amongst us for twenty years—a period, however, in which he has learned to appreciate the advantages of the English capacity for serenity over the incurable mental restlessness of his fellow-Russians. It was perhaps unfortunate that his first views of this country should have been coloured by residence in Newcastle, but this experience was in the authentic texture of the richly varied life which he describes, vividly and with unsparing candour, in *Angry Dust* (HEINEMANN, 10/6). Of good family, he passed from an aristocratic school at Petersburg to a brief cadetship in that quaint service, the TSAR'S Navy, and then to one of the civil ministries, where he spent seven hours a day acquiring polish in the art of wordy procrastination. Sent to England during the War as a liaison officer, he has remained, as vice-consul, as clerk, and, in circumstances of crushing poverty, as a serious novelist with a quickly-growing reputation. Although his account of Imperial Russia naturally claims attention, the main interest of the book lies in its record of the impact of English tradition on a vigorous and disciplined mind, and in a self-examination carried out with a detachment born of long application to Yoga. Politically Mr. GUBSKY has come to accept the Soviet system; hereditary privileges, he thinks, must everywhere give way to a régime planned on merit which he hopes may come by agreed transition instead of revolution.

Family Chronicle

The Years (HOGARTH PRESS, 8/6) of Mrs. VIRGINIA WOOLF'S new novel are —I quote the chapter-headings—1880, 1891, 1907, 1908, 1910, 1911, 1913, 1914, 1917, 1918, and "Present Day," and each has been chosen because it is a landmark of some kind in the history of the *Pargiter* family. The death of PARNELL, the death of KING EDWARD, Armistice Day—these occasions take their places, no more and no less solid and significant than the deaths of *Mrs. Pargiter* in 1880, of *Digby* and *Eugénie* in 1907 (I was puzzled by the chronology here), even of the parlour-maid *Crosby's* dog in 1913. In all these years we are given a picture—sometimes a detailed elusive cross-section, sometimes a brief sketch—of the family's situation; for, yes, Mrs. WOOLF has at last written one of those family chronicles in which the chief point about any given character is that he or she is the only person who can remember certain episodes in the past of the others. It goes without saying that the application of Mrs. WOOLF'S individual technique to this theme has produced something more than ordinarily fresh, clear, and memorable in detail and atmosphere; but until I reached the last and longest chapter I could not get rid of a vague feeling that the theme, which has been used similarly with varying success by so many lesser novelists, was hardly worthy of her. That last chapter, which, as it were, synthesises all the associations of the preceding years, and is full of echoes of the past called up by words and phrases we have come to recognise, profoundly strengthens and gives real importance to a novel which is throughout most enjoyable to read.



"WHAT DID SHE MEAN, SAM, SAYIN' I'VE GOT A LUCKY FACE?"
"LUCKY SOME BLOKE 'ASN'T TAKEN A COUPLE OF POKES AT IT."

Playing the War Game

When Major-General J. F. C. FULLER describes the Boer War as *The Last of the Gentlemen's Wars* (FABER AND FABER, 12/6), thus distinguishing it from that later and larger conflict which was the "the first of the cads' wars," it is difficult to determine whether he puts more of admiration or of irony into the phrase. He really believes that wars should be fought in a spirit of sportsmanship, and that the one in South Africa was on the whole so fought; but he is well aware that battles are as liable to be lost as won on the playing-fields of Eton. For those who managed and mismanaged the particular adventure with which he is here concerned he has a lively contempt. "The dangers in this war were generally manufactured by our own side," he writes, and his criticism extends to his own colonel, whose orders, when as a very young subaltern he was placed in command of a Kaffir scout patrol, he disobeyed with blithe regularity. This recension of a journal kept nearly forty years ago makes entertaining reading and gives a vivid if (in more than one sense) partial impression of a kind of warfare which certainly seems to have been healthier than that we have since grown used to. There was incredibly little bloodshed in it, and a good deal of polo, poker and game-shooting. Even if "on the whole few occupations are so dull as war," it is understandable that the young officer should have left South Africa with regret.

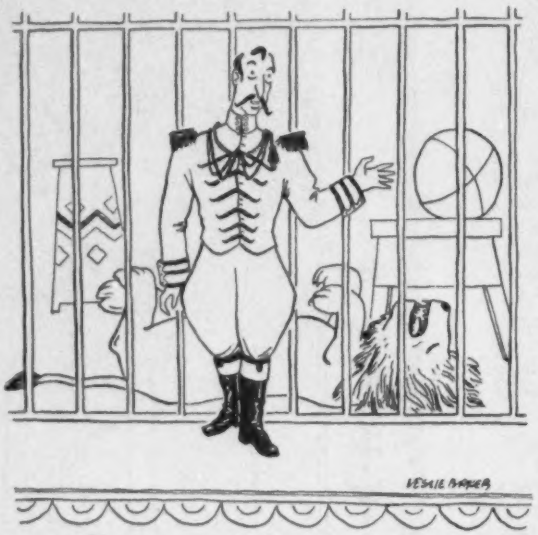
Public Lives

Mr. NOEL COWARD'S autobiography, embellished with photographs in which he is recognisably himself even in marine circumstances at the age of five, makes very good

reading, and its title, *Present Indicative* (HEINEMANN, 12/6), is no empty claim, for out of its pages steps a live person, unspoilt by meteoric success and considerably amused by the wealth of legend to which it has given rise. It is comforting to learn that this remarkable young man, who had the theatrical world of London and New York at his feet by the time he was thirty, wrote play after play and suffered bitter disappointment before *The Vortex*, put on at the Hampstead Everyman in 1924, turned the tide for him; and it is not difficult to appreciate his despair at a public which persisted for years in confusing him with the degenerates who were the objects of his early satire. His account ends with the presentation of *Cavalcade*, when he was clearly uncertain which way his talents would lead next; but by then he was already learning to discard from the dazzling hand which fate had dealt him. The book is full of good stories about the contemporary theatre, and the dry humour and genuine modesty of its author are most attractive.

Russian Pot-Pourri

When you have followed the actual fate of such an artist as, say, CHALIAPIN on the transformation of the Tsarist régime into the Soviet, the similar fortunes of imaginary artists suffer by comparison. I do not suggest that a great writer seized by the possibilities of the theme could not invest it with more poignancy than Mr. LOUIS GOLDING has done in *The Dance Goes On* (RICH AND COWAN, 7/6), but long before I had finished with *Irina Miranova* and the four men assigned to deflect her fortunes I heartily wished myself back in *Magnolia Street*. There is, it appears to me, no psychological action whatever in this perfunctory reel of a ballet-dancer's adventures, from the time when *Borodin*, the veteran dancing-master, takes her on as a new-born baby to the climax of her flight to Finland. She has a pleasant unimpressive brother, a mysterious surgeon-suitor of Red tendencies and an aristocratic lover who, failing to acquire the popular ballerina for cash, has to wait until his wife dies to offer his hand with his heart. Whoever persuaded Mr. GOLDING that domestic realism was not his strong suit has a lot to answer for.



"IS THERE A VETERINARY-SURGEON IN THE AUDIENCE?"

"Slant" on Russia

A girl who has also recently spent a little time in Russia tells me that Miss E. M. DELAFIELD's view of that gigantic experiment is very like her own, and, as I read *Straw Without Bricks* (MACMILLAN, 7/6), I felt that it must also be that of most unprejudiced visitors. When Miss DELAFIELD described a factory for agricultural implements full of clattering machinery as very much like her idea of hell I knew that, prejudiced or no, I should certainly have agreed with her too had I been strong-minded enough to endure her experience of wet and cold, poor food and bad smells, endless delays and domineering guides. Her American publisher required of her to be funny about Russia, and funny she has been, but wise and understanding too, and fair—a fine achievement when one considers the temptation to be otherwise. To add to that she has in her few pages created or enshrined a gallery of characters, *Mrs. Pansy Baker*, *Miss D*, *Miss Blake-and-Miss-Bolton*, *Comrade Eva*, who administered fancy injections as the spirit moved her, and many more who will never be forgotten by the reader.

Business as Usual

So completely is Mr. FREDERICK NIVEN master of his art that even those who find *The Staff at Simson's* (COLLINS, 7/6) too leisurely for their liking will admire his graphic description of a Glasgow business house at the end of last and the beginning of this century. The *Simsons* were soft-goods manufacturers, *John* not so genial as his younger brother *Robert*, but both of them sound men and humanly interested in all who worked for them. Without exaggeration I can say that Mr. NIVEN has brought the various members of this establishment to life, whether they are working, playing pranks or holiday-making. Among the numerous portraits one of the most vivid and pathetic is that of old *Walter Fenwick*, the calender-man, who to save his sister from agonising pain took the law into his own hands; but all the important and some of the unimportant employees are faithfully depicted. I am grateful for a story in which effects are obtained without any symptom of strain or hurry.

Beware of the Dog

In *The Porcelain Fish* (HEINEMANN, 7/6), *Chen*, a Cairn terrier, gives a fine exhibition of intelligence while *Simon Brade* is investigating the murder of *Selford Prentice*. It is a sound story that Miss HARRIETTE CAMPBELL tells, and although at the outset I was a little confused by the many and various people who were either living with or visiting *Prentice* on the evening of his death, my patience in sorting them out was amply rewarded. Indeed when Miss CAMPBELL gets fairly into her stride she proves herself to be in complete command of a curious assortment of characters. Politicians, hunting-folk and servants are all involved in the mystery. But although in retrospect I see that clues have been lavishly shed, I never began to suspect the guilty person.

"Watch for small boys with Mickey Mouse hands."
Sunday Paper Announcement.

We have seen plenty of grown-ups with Donald Duck noses.

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Charivaria

A GARDENING journal reminds its readers that now is the time to decide where the cabbage-patch should be. As a matter of fact Thames-side bungalow-dwellers have already begun to take soundings.

* * *

"How can a father prevent his son going out with a particular girl?" asks a writer. One method is to go out with her himself.

* * *

A firm of bakers is offering to deliver bread already sliced. Sportsmen are confident that this labour-saving device will sooner or later spread to golf-balls.

* * *

It is suggested by a correspondent of a daily paper that hens should be fed on coloured grit so that they may lay ready-made Easter eggs. Another suggestion is that they should be fed on dates so that we may know when the eggs were laid.

* * *

"Pulling strings is a dishonourable method of winning a livelihood," says a playwright. Harpists are now busy trying to think of something pretty sweeping to say about plays.

* * *

An hotel-porter declares that Canadian visitors are usually the most generous in the matter of tips. Apparently he unhesitatingly gives them the palm.

* * *

"New inventions make for laziness," observes a writer. We hear rumours of a new revolving glass globe for lackadaisical goldfish.



* * *

The trouble with a flatlet is that you can't get it for a rentlet.

* * *

A Polish gentleman named POPLAVOSCOVITCH told a magistrate last week that he had come to England to make a name for himself. He didn't say what was wrong with his old one.



"Owing to the recent cold and wet spell," declares a gamekeeper, "partridges that paired at the beginning of February have now drifted apart again." Even Hollywood never thought of blaming the weather.

* * *

A woman has just discovered a mountain. However, it was very likely only a molehill to begin with.

* * *

It is said that a new leech discovered in Central America will hold on to human beings for hours and defy removal. It is to be named the "Well-known Clubman."

* * *

A correspondent reports that a mouse drank half a bottle of olive-oil in his larder. One theory is that the creature was trying to cure itself of squeaking.

* * *





In Belgium a man has been fined for shooting a stork. It was lucky for him that he wasn't in Italy.

* * *

Something should be done to abolish draughts in railway-carriages, states a passenger. Also poker and the three-card trick.

* * *

A tourist draws our attention to an unusual old barn on the Great North Road. It appears that up to the time of going to press it has not been converted into an up-to-date road-house.

* * *

"The author of *The Thirty-Nine Steps* can still create a mystery to chill the spine of the most blasé of readers," says a critic. BUCHAN'S cold spell.

* * *

A new novel is entitled *The Perfect Husband*. The publishers point out as usual that no reference is intended to any living person.

* * *

"The kilt still has its supporters north of the Tweed," says a writer. It must be terribly embarrassing for Scotsmen elsewhere.





THE BRITISH CHARACTER

ABSENCE OF IDEAS FOR MEALS

Blues Beware!

A THOUSAND flappers fair
Adored a Boat-race crew,
With book in hand they used to stand,
Sweet symphonies in blue.

Both morn and afternoon,
Before the trip and after,
Each stayed the men with fountain-pen
Until they'd autographed her.

The Amazonian horde
Grew greater every day;
Those athletes kind just signed and signed,
So chivalrous were they.

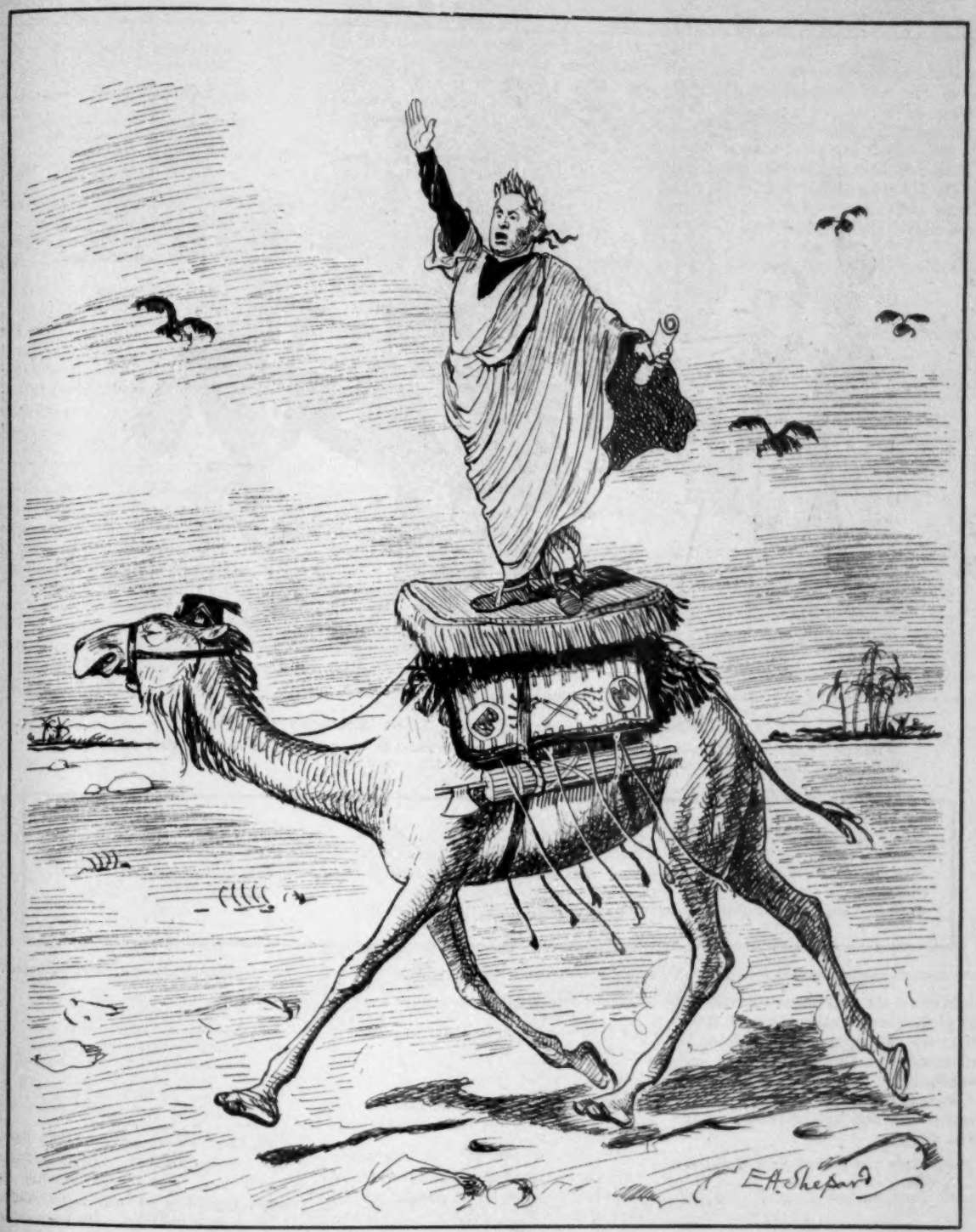
Mark what befell. They lost—
Victims of writer's cramp.
To those who train the moral's plain:
Beware the auto-vamp!

Metrical Mischief

DEAR MR. PUNCH,—Like another Great Comic Character who from the depths "babbled o' green fields," you have, concealed beneath a droll exterior, a heart in willing thraldom to the fair face of your native land. Confidently, then, do I invoke your aid in exposing to public reprobation a canker—inveterate and widespread—infecting (it is not too much to say) our English Poetry and big with menace to the rural beauty of This England.

No feature of that loveliness is more exquisite or more pathetically dependent upon the forbearance of man than our wild-flowers; and the time of year is approaching when "dear Nature's children sweet" will once again lie open to spoliation.

Of all men it weighs upon the poet heaviest to preach and practise the defence of these treasures, so freely drawn on for the embellishment of his verse. Yet what do we find? Associated, it is true, with expressions of regard for these natural objects, couched often in the language of hyperbole—perhaps for that reason the more



THE GREAT SHEIK

[Signor MUSSOLINI is stated to have said in reply to a deputation of Moslem leaders, "Italy will always be the friend and protector of Islam throughout the world."]



MIXED FEELINGS

Budget Stakes. Result: SURPLUS 1; TRADE DEPRESSION 0

JOE (*to* AUSTEN). "WELL DONE, MY BOY! CAN'T HELP BEING PLEASED THAT YOU 'VE PULLED IT OFF, THOUGH IT WOULD HAVE SUITED YOUR OLD DAD'S BOOK BETTER IF THE OTHER HORSE HAD WON."

More than 75 Cartoons and Caricatures of the late Sir AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, *who died last week, appeared from time to time in the pages of Punch, during his long and honourable political career as a Member of Parliament, as a Cabinet Minister, and more recently as an Elder Statesman and adviser. The Cartoon reproduced here shows him in his first tenure of office as Chancellor of the Exchequer receiving encouragement from his famous father in the Spring of* 1905.

insidious—we find *passim* invitations to pick, pluck, gather or cull flowers of every description, whether for the adornment of the person or in sheer wantonness.

An early example of this wantonness is afforded by the poet SPENSER, who sings:—

"Strowe me the ground with Daffadowndillies,
And Cowslips, and Kingcups and loved Lillies!"

SHAKESPEARE, whose writings, though poetry, are rarely devoid of good sense, observes that "lilies that fester smell far worse than weeds"; and, in refreshing contrast to MILTON'S reckless

"Throw hither all your quaint enameld eyes . . .
To strew the Laureat Herse where Lycid lies,"

enjoins

"Not a flower, not a flower sweet,
On my black coffin let there be strown."

Mischievous enough, as calculated to corrupt the young, are allusions by our older poets to the making of posies, true-love-knots and garlands, involving the wholesale destruction of wild-flowers. Let one specimen suffice. The swain whom *Phillada* flouted complains—

"In the last month of May
I made her posies;
I heard her often say
That she loved roses.
Cowslips and gilliflowers
And the white lily
I brought to deck the bowers
For my sweet Philly.
But she did all disdain,
And threw them back again."

But after all those were the days when the countryside was safe from democracy. The same lessons in pillage, repeated by our later poets, are far less excusable. In particular we should look to our Laureates to take the lead in measures for the preservation of natural beauty, but again what do we find?

Writing, one suspects, under the influence of sack—or was it sherry?—

provided by the taxpayer, WORDSWORTH, after noting that

> "Earth herself is adorning
> This sweet May morning"—

continues with undisguised glee—

> "And the children are culling
> On every side,
> In a thousand valleys, far and wide,
> Fresh flowers . . ."

This is sheer incitement to the young and impressionable to tear Earth's lovely garment into tatters. Now listen to TENNYSON—

> "Flower in the crannied wall,
> I pluck you out of the crannies,
> I hold you here, root and all, in my hand."

"Root and all!" One can almost hear the little victim scream as the ruthless bard drags it from its anchorage. As likely as not one of our rarer pellitories, plundered to make a poet's homily.

If TENNYSON can find inspiration for a poem by plucking up a plant, what loveliest bloom will be safe from those writers who to conceal the poverty of their poetic endowments ape the mannerisms of their betters even to the extent of caricature? Will they not rush from hedgerow to hedgerow and pull up specimen after specimen in the vain hope of inducing a visitation of the Muse? Deplorable too in its effect on the public mind and conscience—a soil only too fertile—must be this sowing of tares by a class of men skilled in the art of emotional appeal. Was it for setting such an example that SHELLEY called poets the legislators of mankind?

I submit, Sir, that in our national fight for the life of the wild-flower no more time should be lost in legislating against these so-called legislators. I venture to make one or two suggestions:—

(1) A Board for the Restraint of Poetic Licence should be erected, charged with the duties of

(*a*) Drastic expurgation of such "Gather ye," "Strowe me" passages in our poetry as threaten the destruction of wild-flowers;

(*b*) Substitution wherever possible of suitably-phrased exhortations to protect wild nature;

(*c*) The censorship of new poetry before release.

Such measures will, I realise, evoke bitter hostility in certain quarters, where the spectacle is enjoyed of Nature outraged in the supposed interests of Art. We must accordingly have a strong fearless Board, with the Poet Laureate, for reasons which I hope I have made clear, as an *ex-officio* member.

(2) Where, if at all, allusions to the forbidden practice is allowed to stand, the young should be taught to construe such flowers of speech in a metaphorical or allegorical and not in a literal sense; as invitations to make their own anthologies (I need not remind you, Sir, of the derivation of that word) of the Good, the Beautiful, the True. If they are to wear the white flower of a blameless life they must refrain from despoiling the hedgerows for it.

I am, Sir,
PARCE NON CARPE FLOREM.

Thoughts on a Continuous Performance

I WENT to the Pic.
And saw a *flick*,
The rottenest *flick* on earth;
I had to remain
And see it again
To get my money's worth.

"This report almost certainly refers to a giant forest-hog, the largest member of the pig family, described originally from Kenya Colony and which is now known to extend across Equatorial Africa from east to west."
Letter to "The Times."

It takes about three weeks for its left leg to know what its right leg 's doing.



"WHY DIDN'T YOU HOLLER OUT?"
"COS IT 'S RUDE TO SPEAK WITH YOUR MOUTH FULL, DEARIE."

Imbroglio

It is always interesting to know how the poor live, so I make no apology to *Punch* readers for telling them that there are in London certain eating-houses or restaurants where clients hang up their own hats and coats on pegs before sitting down to meat, instead of having them removed to places unknown by soft-footed attendants. East of Temple Bar these places are frequented during the lunch-hour by such sweepings as barristers, journalists and money-changers—and among them, surprisingly, I. So much for the *mise-en-scène*.

It was one day last week, as I sat eating a rarebit with a genteel air and sipping my cup of '37 coffee, that I saw another solitary customer rise up from his table at the far end of the room and calmly remove my hat, my beautiful bowler, from the communal hat-stand and clap it on his head. There is something about the imminent loss of an old and trusted bowler that spurs a man of sensibility to instant action. I fled down the labyrinthine ways between the tables like Apollo in pursuit of Daphne.

"Excuse me," I said, "but I think that is my hat."

The stranger halted and turned a swarthy countenance upon me. He had a short thick beard, which I instantly mistrusted, and when he spoke I saw that instinct had not betrayed me. His speech was not the speech of a forthright Englishman. It might have been Chinese or it might have been exceptionally fluent Russian. But it meant nothing to me.

There was a movement of interest among the surrounding patrons. It is not often that we hear Russian spoken in The Bolivia.

I decided to try the language of diplomacy.

"Vous portez mon chapeau, monsieur."

The stranger received the statement with an air of profound interest and capped it with something appropriate from Dostoevsky.



"Would it look very provincial if I were to eat my sandwiches?"

"Mein Hut," I said hopefully, gesturing at it with my right hand. "Das ist mein Hut." The restaurant was getting quite a cosmopolitan atmosphere.

The stranger simply threw out his hands and babbled.

"Come, come, Gregoroff!" I said sharply. "This trifling does you no credit. Hat, Hut, chapeau—don't you know anything?"

"Try 'hatto,'" suggested someone. "It might be the Italian for it."

That gave me an idea. "Habes meam galeam," I said distinctly, much as Cicero might have spoken in similar circumstances. "Or pilleum, if you prefer it." It was quite useless. The classics seemed to mean even less to Gregoroff than modern languages.

At this stage a tall fair man joined us from a nearby table.

"Perhaps he knows Turkish," he suggested. "I picked up a little during the War. Shall I try?"

"If you would be so kind," I murmured.

I confess I paled a little under my tan while he was speaking. It seemed to me that no Russian could listen to such stuff unmoved.

"What did you say to him?" I whispered when it was over.

"I told him it was your hat."

"Oh, was that all? I was afraid—but it doesn't matter. Did he understand, do you think?"

The tall fair man rightly thought not.

"Can I be of any assistance, gentlemen?"

The manager of The Bolivia is a broadminded man, but when he hears one of his customers telling another in Turkish that his hat is not his own he feels that the time has come to intervene. He arrived now, smiling but a little anxious. A waiter bearing a *soufflé* lent support in his rear.

"This gentleman," I said, indicating Gregoroff, who now had a wary look in his eye and was clearly preparing to sell his life dearly, "has taken my hat and refuses to talk sense."

"You are sure it is your hat?" asked the manager, like the fool he is.

"Sure?" I said. "I know every inch of it. Oblige me by looking closely at the right-hand side of it, just above the ribbon. (It's all right, Gregoroff, nobody's going to hurt you.) You see that dent? Well, that was made when it fell from the top of a No. 73 bus just opposite the Boileau Arms. Does that prove anything to you?"

"The buses on that route have all got closed tops," put in the waiter cleverly.

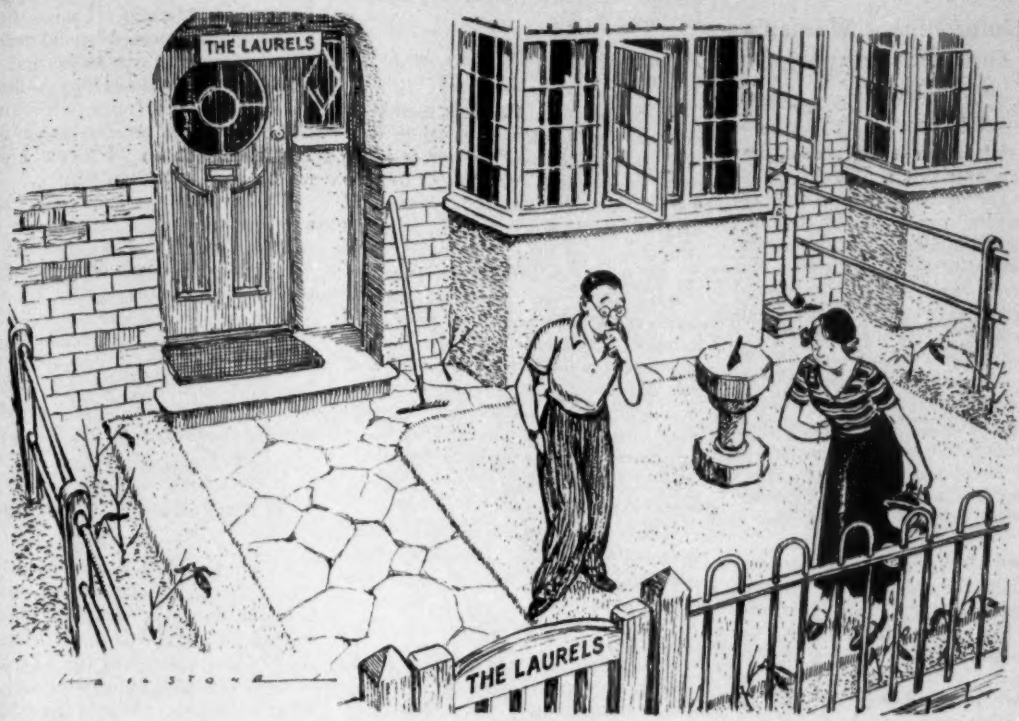
"I am talking about the autumn of 1923, my good man," I said, and squashed him flat.

While this conversation was going on Gregoroff had produced a small paper-covered booklet from his pocket and was now feverishly turning its pages. Suddenly a gleam of relief shone in his haunted eyes.

"I haf," he read out triumphantly, "alreedy paid."

There was only one thing to be done. I snatched the book from his hands and began, in my turn, a frenzied hunt. All I had to do was to find the word "Hat" in English and then point out its equivalent in his barbaric tongue.

Unfortunately this phrase-book, like all phrase-books, had its limitations. (It was, I saw to my surprise, "for the use of Bulgarian students"; but Gregoroff will always be Gregoroff to me.) Though full of useful and often polished remarks, such as "My brother and I hope to stay here till the end of July," and "This dish is rather cold," it did not appear to envisage any particular difficulty about hats. One looked in vain for any mention of bowlers.



"You know, I rather wish now that we *had* called it 'Clovelly.'"

Once only I had a moment of hope, when I came upon a long sentence beginning, "Where can one buy a map, a toothbrush, an umbrella, a pair of boots, an alpenstock..." It was an imposing list, containing almost all the necessities of a happy life. Except hats. But that, I suppose, was to be expected. In Bulgaria one does not buy hats. One simply takes one off the nearest peg.

I gave it up. I handed the book back to Gregoroff with a low bow. I thanked the manager and the tall fair man for their assistance. I even thanked the waiter. It was, after all, I told them bravely, a very old hat. Then I returned with dignity to my rarebit.

"This dish," I said to myself in Bulgarian, "is rather cold."

H. F. E.

The Population Falls

In 1937 was a rumour going round
That income-tax was soon to be six shillings in the pound;
The cost of education every season seemed to swell,
And to everyone's astonishment the population fell.

They pulled down all the houses where the children used to crowd
And built delightful blocks of flats where children weren't allowed;
And if father got a job there wasn't anywhere to dwell,
But to everyone's astonishment the population fell.

Five hundred brand-new motor-cars each morning rode the roads,
And flashed about like comets or sat motionless as toads;
Whichever course they took they made the public highway hell,
And to everyone's astonishment the population fell.

The laws were very comical; to bet was voted lax,
But your betting was the only thing that nobody would tax;
You couldn't have a wine unless you'd sandwiches as well,
And to Parliament's astonishment the population fell.

Great Science nobly laboured to increase the people's joys,
But every new invention seemed to add another noise;
One was always on the telephone or answering the bell,
And to everyone's astonishment the population fell.

The taverns were controlled by men who didn't want to drink,
The newspapers were run by men who hadn't time to think;
The cinema was managed by a man who couldn't spell;
And to everyone's astonishment the population fell.

Abroad, to show that everyone was passionate for peace,
All children under seven joined the army or police;
The babies studied musketry while mother filled a shell—
And all the nations wondered why the population fell.

The world, in short, which never was extravagantly sane
Developed all the signs of inflammation of the brain;
The past was not encouraging, the future none could tell,
And some of us were *not* surprised the population fell.

A. P. H.

The Unintelligent Woman's Pocket Guide to Bringing Out a Son

So much is heard at this time of year about Bringing Out a Daughter that we feel in the face of such preponderant and expert knowledge any small observations we might have to offer on the subject would be both superfluous and impertinent, and the Unseasoned Parent desirous of such enlightenment is counselled to go straight to the fountain-head and consult one of those marriage-brokers who feature in our agony columns under the artful appellation of Society Women willing for a consideration TO SPONSOR. Meanwhile we direct our lesser social comprehension to illuminating the hitherto neglected field of Bringing Out a Son.

Sons, we affirm, should be Brought Out. Otherwise they are apt forcibly to be ejected or lured from their professional or collegiate retreats by Unscrupulous Hussies, leaving mother no say in it.

First, we propose that the mother examine impartially that which she has to bring out.

Has the son—

MONEY? They'll be after him.
LOOKS? They'll be after him.
NEITHER? They'll be after him.

All that will be affected by his possession or lack of the above attributes will be his position in the dance-lists, governed by the facility with which he Leaps to Mind. It is possible for the perceptive woman to deduce from that degree of vigour displayed in the invitation's superscription whether her Herbert is regarded as worth while or just Another Man.

Having assimilated this incontrovertible truth, the mother may proceed forthwith to the

Preparation of the Bringing Out for the Son

This is simple. One has merely to murmur negligently at a bridge tea, "My son thinks so," following it up with a passing reference to his maturity: "My son, who is second wicket down for St. Thomasina's Hospital, thinks so," or "At least, so my son, who 's so devoted to his Yeomanry, says," to introduce into a dozen consciousnesses at once the thought "Good gracious! Has she got a son young enough to dance?" and the owners of these consciousnesses having daughters old enough to be no small anxiety, his appearance at a dozen parties will be promptly solicited.

But do not say

"Uncle Rudolph left George so comfortable." This encourages disconcerting inundation and puts ideas into their heads.

Or

"I suppose my Anthony *is* good-looking, though I oughtn't to say so." This correspondingly puts ideas into their heads, but unbecoming ideas.

Or

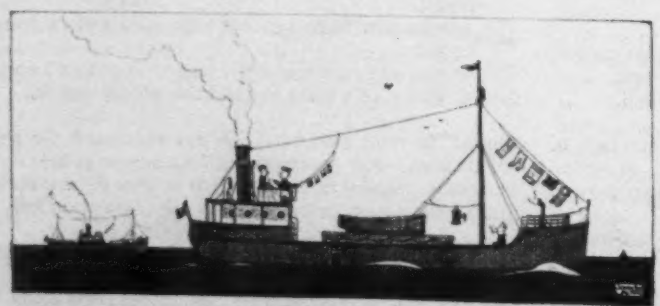
Having perpetrated the afore-mentioned folly, refrain from making matters worse by adding "But he's such a boy at heart." This only eggs them on.

So many Mothers of Débutantes fancy a good-looking boy at heart.

Preparation of the Son for the Bringing Out

Unlike the daughter, the son may be a hulk with no features at all left over from a succession of scrums, no conversation, no manners, large raw wrists, and may favour American collars and white waistcoats with a dinner-jacket and *yet get away with it*, providing he's not timid. Undue timidity is the one insuperable social detriment the modern man can suffer, and consequently it is suggested that the farouche lad be persuaded (prior to his Bringing Out) to embark on a course in Mental Hygiene, such as "I KNEW I COULD, SO I DID."

To know he can, and to be insufferable oaf enough not to realise he is one will get Sebastian anywhere. It is the Universal Passport. But should this conviction not already be his by inheritance from the spear side of his descent, then better by far than any belated psychological corrective is the benefit of a mother who grasped Time well by the Forelock and instilled it into him from the push-cart up.



"I CAN'T MAKE HEAD OR TAIL OF FEATHERSTONE'S REPLY; IT LOOKS AS THOUGH HE MUST HAVE BEEN READING OUR WASHING."

Winter Sports in Ireland

EARLY this month Mrs. Furney, the young doctor's housekeeper, stood at her open door and watched a jackdaw carry a twig towards the tall tree near the bridge. "He had the appearance of bein' altogether consecrated upon what he was at," she told her employer happily. "We'll be apt to have the spring anny day now." Next morning, in an atmosphere of eerie silence, Mrs. Furney opened her back-door again and gazed incredulously upon a small yard so deeply embedded in snow as to appear quite unfamiliar to its owner.

A detailed account of her reactions to these unexpected weather conditions revealed the fact that her very first thought was for the intensely brooding hen in the little outhouse. There, for nearly a fortnight, she, like the building jackdaw, had been "consecrating upon what she was at," which in her case was the ushering into a gratified world of a clutch of March-hatched chickens, her daily constitutional being a matter of supreme importance. "She was out in the snow before ever she seen to the differ," Mrs. Furney said of her; "but she flopped an' she flounced an' then back wid her to the nest, an' she growlin' a caution all the day afther."

Her next thought was of her misguided employer's amazed gratification at the sight of such a snowfall in a district where Arctic conditions are very rare. In this she was not disappointed. "His two eyes prothruded," she reported, "till you could have snared them wid a sthraw rope."

In season and out of season ever since he came to Bawnoge more than two years ago, immediately after his one and only Swiss holiday, young



"THANK 'EAVENS WE GOT THE SHALLER END THIS 'ARF."

Dr. O'Hara had talked about winter sports, even to his bewildered dispensary patients. With the return to normal of local flu temperatures he took up the subject again, having dropped it while the epidemic lasted, greatly to the relief of the shivering sufferers. "There was times when there was only a sheet of tissha-paper between me an' Dant's Infernum," Pat Murphy said of his own fevered hours, "an' there was more times when I was the very same as if I had me back to a wind that was honed upon an iceberg, an' I wanted no snowy talk then, you may be sure."

For more than two years a pair of long narrow boards labelled SKI have stood in the corner of the bachelor doctor's sitting-room collecting dust that is carefully removed by him. Because of his strange pronunciation of the name a romantic story was spread at first by the interested landlady concerning the mysterious SHE so often mentioned by him. For in Mrs. Furney's opinion the final letter was merely a misprint for the more usual Y, and the uncertain poise of the long boards gave her a lot of extra trouble. "Every time I do polish into the corner wid anny great exactness," she said with unconscious truth, "the Sky is inclined to fall."

* * * * *

No one but old Mat Murphy saw the delighted winter-sporter plod through the crisp snow on his way to the near-by Furry Hill, dressed in official costume and carrying his paraphernalia. "He was got up Dandy Pat," the observer said, "an' he went off garglin' to hisself, an' off wid me afther him." So deeply engrossed was Dr. O'Hara in his misunderstood attempts at yodelling—inspired by the longed-for snow—that he was quite unaware of being followed.

Still unnoticed, Mat watched him climb laboriously to the top of the steep rise, where, dimmed now by distance, he fastened to his boots the long narrow runners. Then apparently he launched himself into space.

After that things happened so quickly that the watcher confessed to some uncertainty as to the actual sequence of events, though he stuck to the fact that he could see the "runnin' boords" quite plainly all the time, no matter how often he lost sight of the revolving figure of the doctor. Even when the downward rush ended in the deep drift in Healy's ditch the strange footgear remained upright, and Mat got his first good look at them. "They had a point that'd kick the eye out of a midge," he told his friends.

It was a bruised and battered amateur that limped home with the aid of Matthew Murphy, and there, to the delight of his landlady, deposited the "runnin' boords" in the small garage. Next day the snow had almost disappeared from Bawnoge, and, thanks to the account of his winter sporting broadcast by the one and only eyewitness, people feel that the young doctor should be very glad.

"If he had been killed that day and had left them ould yokes at home," Mat said over and over again, "he would have saved his life." D. M. L.

More Results of Physical Culture

"Mrs. L—— gave an interesting talk on her thews."

Women's Institute Report in Local Paper.

Wandering Circles

For well over a fortnight now I have been carrying about with me a small but potent cutting from an evening newspaper which reads as follows:—

HAVE YOU FOUND YOURSELF?

Many people in this world wander round in circles, looking for themselves—until they get stuck in a rut.

Are you still looking? If you have discovered yourself, do you like what you have found?

I repeat, that has been in my pocket for more than fourteen days. Sometimes I have fancied that I could hear it chuckling and buzzing to itself, but I have continually put off getting to grips with it. "After all," I have thought, "this is a problem I could leave in the hands of Sir WILLIAM BEVERIDGE or the B.B.C. or even the police. My services are not indispensable. Why should I bother?" And yet here I am, bothering. I never spare myself. (I never stint myself either.)

There are several angles from which we may approach the question. It would probably be most in keeping with the spirit of the cutting if we tried to approach it from all of them at once, but I mean to take them one by one and keep my space-time continuum in reasonably good repair.

It would be as well to begin by taking it literally; the sooner we get that over the better. Taking it literally gives us a picture which is highly disturbing in a sociological sense: less or more according to the number we take to be meant by the word "many." *Many people wander round in circles looking for themselves;* that would be bad enough, even though it does sound like an exclusively medical problem; for all those nervous breakdowns have to be seen to by somebody. But on top of all that, *they* ("all" understood) *get stuck in a rut.* If this is true, the doctor has to call in a man with a spade; if they only think it's true, he has to call another doctor. Moreover, all the other people wandering round in circles must be continually tripping over those who are stuck in the rut.

As for the doctor's interview . . .

"Come, now, why are we wandering round in circles?"

"Oh, I was just looking for myself, doctor—just looking for myself."

"Indeed, and did you—ah—did you find——?"

"I nearly had myself once," says the patient chattily. "I was as big as that," he continues, holding his hands apart, "if I was an inch. But I wasn't clever enough for me. The doors of a Tube-train shut and kept me out just after I'd got in, and I couldn't catch myself after all. My! but I was a beauty."

There is a brief pause. Then the doctor gives a slight cough and says, "And now——"

"Now I'm stuck in a rut. Could you give me something to take for that?"

"Hm. About how wide is the rut?"

"Oh, medium, medium. To tell you the truth," the patient bends forward to whisper, "I have an idea I'm stuck in the same rut a little further along. Pretty good, eh?"

Not much more of this kind of thing and the doctor would be wandering in circles, beside *him*self. And if we continue working out these statements to the literal end, so shall we.

Now for the second angle, then: the metaphorical one. Let us approach these brief paragraphs in the belief that they enshrine a metaphor (and if they enshrine one metaphor I think they enshrine—at a conservative estimate—two).

We now find a lot of people wandering about *metaphorically* looking for themselves, or in other words (this is my guess) unaware of the sort of thing people like them ought to be doing. Very well. But what are we going to do about the supplementary facts that they are also wandering in circles and will eventually get stuck in a rut?

It may be that the word "circles" means more than it says. Perhaps these homeless wanderers have come from diplomatic circles and strayed into naval circles; perhaps they belong to the philatelic world and are fooling about in the pig-sticking world;* perhaps even they should have stuck to official quarters and have unwisely burst on semi-official quarters. But I don't really think this is the idea at all. I think the writer of the paragraphs meant to convey the notion of aimlessness and that the word he should have used for "circles" was "spirals."

I admit I don't see how a wanderer in spirals is going to get stuck in a rut, but then the only rut the wanderer in circles is going to get stuck in is his own, the circular one he made himself (the chump). However, we're getting too literal again. Let us fight our way out of the metaphorical angle before it proves to be a metaphorical corner.

On the whole perhaps it would be best to fight our way right out of the subject at the same time. I still believe there are several more angles from which it may be approached, but in the first place I can't bother to work them out, and in the second place I'm as sick of the whole thing as you are. Honour is satisfied. Let us leave while we are still able to recognise our own hat and coat.

(Mind the rut.) R. M.



"GREAT SCOTT! WHO IN THE WORLD CAN BE RINGING US UP?"

* "The Kadir Cup, the blue riband of the pig-sticking world." *Evening Paper.*

Comic Songs

FOR the fact that there is much less whistling in the streets than there used to be, we must probably blame the modern taste which elevates films above music-halls and dreary American crooning, with monotonous mechanical words, above our own transcripts from life, often vulgar, I admit, but usually vivacious. Films have their melodies (canned), but they rarely get into the public's mouth; whereas in the days, or nights, when the Halls drew us, there were as many as half-a-dozen singers at a performance, each with three songs, and special favourites with four, and we all joined in the chorus and carried it away.

Since even from such music-halls as we still have, songs have almost disappeared in favour of monologues and dancers, I must suppose, since we once enormously honoured singing, that our national character is changing. A hundred and more years ago Song Books, containing collections, were published by the million, to be succeeded by individual compositions with pictorial lithographed covers, published also by the million, priced at four shillings but sold much cheaper; and everyone would hum or whistle the latest tune, and every professional had a thousand amateur imitators. But now? Now, whenever one hears such airs they are old. The painters at a house near me—a lordly mansion overshadowing the neighbourhood—which, like so many others, is receiving a brilliant white coat in honour of the coronation—sing all the time, as, I believe, painters always do—I mean house-painters, not R.A.'s—but what do you think they sing? Nothing from JAMES FAWN, or HARRY RANDALL, or MARK SHERIDAN, or R. G. KNOWLES, or T. E. DUNVILLE or CHARLES COBORN or CHARLES GODFREY or HERBERT CAMPBELL or DAN LENO, or MARIE LLOYD or ADA LUNDBERG or KATIE LAWRENCE, because there are no such singers any more to give the nation its ditties. No, these painters, perched high on their ladders, have been singing incessantly the Toreador's song from *Carmen*: a song which I remember, to my surprise and pain, I once heard heralding the procession at the beginning of a bull-fight in Seville. "Surprise and pain" because it seemed to me all wrong that a tune composed by a Frenchman for a stage imitation of a bull-fight should have been adopted in Spain for the genuine article. But I was, I suppose, once again too sensitive.



"MARY, YOUR MOTHER HAS JUST TELEPHONED TO SAY YOUR SISTER HAS FLU."
"FLEW, MADAM? BUT WHERE HAS SHE WENT?"

Meanwhile it should make an interesting inquiry why house-painters always have voices, whether, I should guess, they want them or not, whereas among us there are so many persons who would like to be able to sing but cannot achieve an accurate note, and, when it comes to whistling, can emit no musical sound, purse their lips as they may. What's the cause of this connection between music and paint? Why is it that to be on a ladder promotes warbling? Can the production of strains be a prophylactic against lead-poisoning? Whatever the reason, the fact remains that the house-painting season now raging is accompanied by song which is making the West-End unusually harmonious. But that is a different matter from whistling comic songs in the streets.

I was mentioning here a fortnight ago that a muffin-man's bell has recently been suppressed and silenced in a town where the sound of it was considered to be against the amenities of the place; and whistling in the streets may of course have also come under the ban of the busybodies who now arrange our lives. But I hope not. I hope—and believe—that there is going to be a revival of music-hall popularity—that this old world will wisely come full circle again—and that comic songs will return, and errand-boys will whistle them. E. V. L.

Forgetfulness

We saw Laura off to do the shopping.

At least, I stood at the hall-door and told her the last bit of the story about poor Alice and the *extraordinary* idea she'd had about doing her hair into curls all round her face—and Charles said, "Have you got enough petrol?"

"Heaps," said Laura. "At least I haven't looked. I expect so. She's got the wrong *face* altogether."

"So have a good many of us," I returned rather bitterly, having just caught sight, in the hall looking-glass, of a face that apparently turns pale mauve when exposed to the cold spring air.

"You can't change your face now," Charles said—only too truly. "There's barely a gallon left in the tank; you'd better wait while I fill her up."

So Charles filled her up, and Laura told me about a new detective-novel that we simply *must* get as soon as she could remember what it was called or who'd written it.

"Now," said Charles, "have you got everything?"

"Yes, yes. It's all down on my list. You want the clock left to be regulated, and the saddle to be called for, and if it isn't ready I'm to curse the man, and the library books to be changed; and Cook wants forty million things at the grocer's and fifty million at the ironmonger's, and one bunch of radishes."

I said at once that one bunch of radishes was absurd. If there were to be radishes at all, let there be radishes.

Laura quite agreed.

"Radishes are just like bread-sauce, or green peas, or even blotting-paper. No one ever really has enough of them."

The rather interesting little discussion thus opened up occupied less time than it merited, owing to the intervention of Charles.

"And you're going to register that letter for me, and pick up a parcel at the station on your way back. And remember that new 'Halt' sign at the station cross-roads."

Laura said she wasn't in the least likely to forget it, and found her hat—already under the rug in the car, her bag—concealed beneath *The Radio Times*, and looked for her gloves—discovered two days later on the top of the Chinese cabinet on the landing.

Quite soon after the recovery of the bag and the hat she was able to drive away. And about twenty minutes afterwards Charles brought in a piece of paper covered with writing and asked, Was it anything important? he'd found it in the greenhouse. It was, I readily informed him, Laura's shopping-list.

Since Charles has known Laura for years, the ejaculations expressive of amazement and incredulity that poured from his lips can really only have been a form of affectation.

"I dare say she'll manage very well without it," I said. "After all, she went through most of the things before she left; and anyway we nearly always go to the same places whenever we shop, and Cook always wants groceries and a new colander and new dish-cloths because the old ones were wore through before ever she set foot in the place."

"I don't see how anybody could make head or tail of this," was Charles's reply.

I looked at the lists.

Lib. Bks. would have been plain to me even without the addition *Something Mudr at ? by ? ?*. Nor was I given pause even for a moment by *Clk.—N.B. Loses twenty-four in twenty-four, tell man*. The next item—*Sad*—looked rather pathetic until one remembered about Charles's saddle.

Cook's requirements were less readily deciphered. *Dem.*, *Parm.*, *Blckg.*, *Marm.* and *Scr. Sp.* one could identify. *G.P.* might have been gregory powder, some patent cereal, a roll of grease-proof paper, or grate-polish.

Dish, *Tea* and *Floor*—½-doz. each—I naturally recognised at once as old friends.

On the other hand, one or two hieroglyphics defeated me to the end, and it was merely an intimate acquaintance with Laura, extending over a number of years, that enabled me to tell Charles that I thought they represented gramophone-records, a blue jumper, chocolate-creams and a general look round Woolworth's Stores.

Charles, seeming bewildered and discouraged, simply replied that it would be quite impossible for him to spare the car next day in order that Laura might go back and get all the things she'd forgotten.

"It'll be all right," said I—as many a wife and mother has said before me on even slenderer foundations.

And so it was—in a way.

"I didn't forget a thing, I don't believe!" cried Laura gaily as she dashed into the house; and, judging from the number of packages that she was strewing all over the place, it did seem as though there couldn't have been anything left for her to forget.

"Except," said Charles, "your shopping-list."

"I know. That was a pity. But I did the clock and your saddle and the library-books and the radishes."

"Did you remember the 'Halt' sign at the station cross-roads?"

"It wasn't on my list, so it wouldn't have made any difference either way," was Laura's extraordinary reply.

"What about *Dem.* and *Marm.* and all those?" I asked, and Laura replied modestly that she really thought she'd hardly forgotten any of them.

"But I'm afraid, Charles," she added, "that I didn't register your letter. You see, as a matter of fact you forgot to give it to me." E. M. D.

These Long Spring Evenings

Meeting Everard Galliproof in the saloon bar, I observed in a perfectly disinterested way that the evenings were getting longer.

"You mean shorter," Everard corrected me.

"No," I said, "longer."

"Shorter," he insisted. "Only last November you were complaining that you found it so difficult to keep the children amused *these long winter evenings*. And now, at the beginning of spring, you tell me they are getting longer. Well, I simply refuse to believe it.

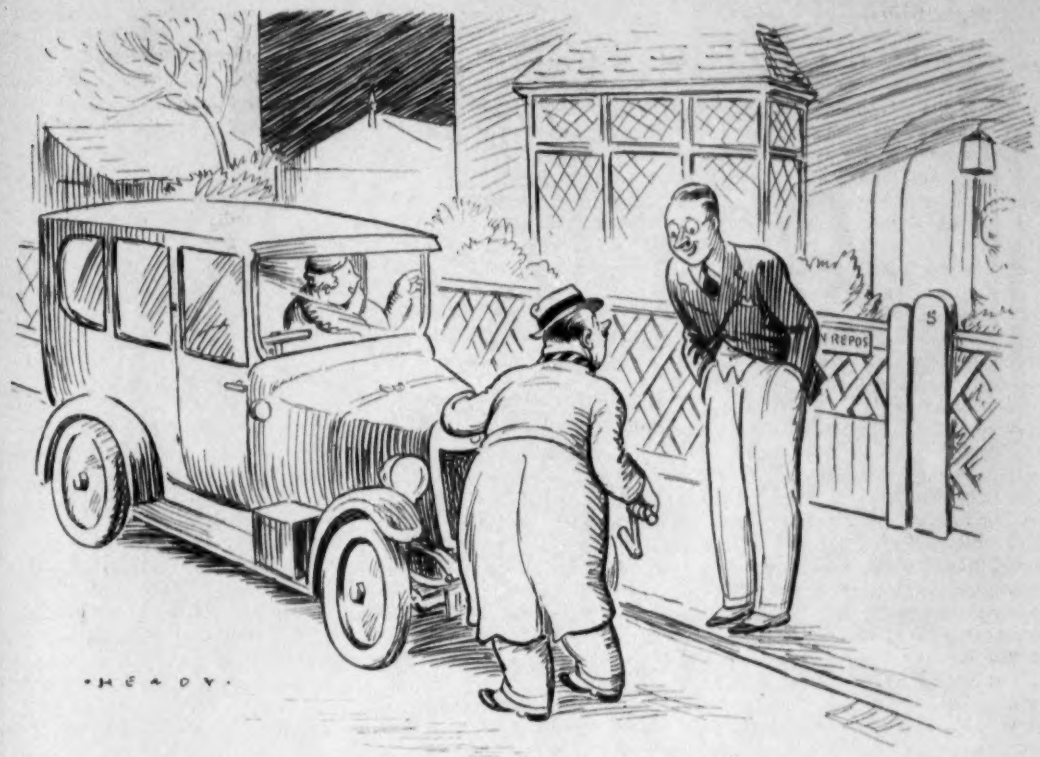
"In point of fact," he went on, "I know for a certainty that the evenings are not only exactly the same length as the evenings last week, but also as those last month, and even last year. Taking an evening, for the sake of argument, as lasting from five o'clock until seven-thirty, I have made repeated tests with a stop-watch, and the only difference I have been able to observe is a trifling alteration in the time at which the sun sets."

"You know perfectly well what I mean," I said.

"You're entirely wrong," Everard contradicted. "I've not the faintest idea what you mean. But leaving that aside, we have it on the highest authority that, far from getting longer, the evenings are if anything getting shorter, as I said just now. In fact I wouldn't be a bit surprised if this evening were shorter than the corresponding evening in 1837 by as much as ·00000047 second."

Later, when we had established that what I meant was that there was a greater proportion of daylight per day of twenty-four hours, Everard became discursive.

"Why," he asked, "are we never given advice about amusing ourselves at this time of the year as we are at the corresponding period in the autumn? When the evenings are



"Don't you wait out in the cold. I'll just rattle along."
"That's all right. I'll just hear you off."

getting darker (not shorter) we are absolutely pestered with suggestions. Every newspaper has its article on the Woman's Page entitled 'Evenings are Drawing In.' Intelligent people react by taking postal courses in German or book-keeping or Tâoism. Unintelligent people like yourself take to playing bridge or pontoon, or perhaps Bilge-O, the New Race Game."

"A Scream from Start to Finish," I added mechanically.

"For any number of players," Everard completed. "Other people again," he went on, "will brush up their knitting, resume their study of the works of Edgar Wallace, or merely go to the flicks."

"Do they have to be told about these things by the editress of the Woman's Page?" I protested.

"Probably not," Everard admitted; "but the editress herself is perennially convinced that they do, and as long as people appear to go on following her advice I don't see how it will be possible to disillusion her.

"In the spring, however," he continued, "it is a different matter. For some reason no one ever thinks of telling us how to spend our evenings in March, and consequently we poor mugs just continue to do the same things as we were doing in January and February and missing the Lord knows what fun and games. Not until that fateful morning in the middle of April, when we wake up to find that we have forgotten to advance our clocks——"

"Retard our clocks," I suggested.

"—we have forgotten to advance or retard our clocks, whichever it is," he conceded, "and that consequently it is either still midnight or nearly noon—not until then do we realise that we are due for a fundamental change in the manner of ordering our lives."

"This morning I sent an article to the Woman's Page editress of *The Daily Thing*. She cannot in fairness refuse to print it, for it was founded on an article published on that very page last October. My contribution was entitled 'Evenings are Drawing Out.' Four full-stops after 'Out,' of course.

"We started off on the assumption that there was the same difficulty in amusing oneself in the spring as there apparently is in the autumn. Basing my advice on that published six months previously, I tabulated my suggestions for all kinds of intellect. They ran as follows."

Everard read off his list from a scrap of paper:—

"(1) Stop learning German.
(2) Stop learning book-keeping.
(3) Stop learning Tâoism.
(4) Stop playing bridge.
(5) Stop playing pontoon.
(6) Stop playing Bilge-O, the New Race Game.
(7) Brush down your knitting.
(8) Stop reading.
(9) Don't go to the flicks.

"And there you are," he wound up triumphantly, "all ready to face the spring and summer with a light heart and a full mind."

"But my dear man," I objected, "your suggestions are all negative."

"Certainly they are all negative," Everard agreed. "But at any rate they don't leave you any worse off than you were before the beginning of last autumn, and you managed to get along all right then."



New Maid. "OH, IF YOU PLEASE, 'M—DO YOUR MICE PREFER CHEDDAR OR GORGONZOLA?"

Hats

(With acknowledgments to a recent pronouncement of Mr. Justice Hawke.)

WHEN gentle Spring has come anew
Or any other season,
When some peculiar rite is due,
Or for no obvious reason,
Dreams of new hats one day you'll find
Strongly possess the female mind.

Then forth you'll see the lady fare
Armed for no simple shopping;
Mark what determination's there;
This one will take some stopping;
Note well what iron purpose lies
Deep hidden in those dauntless eyes.

And on she goes, and in her wake
Ten thousand hats lie scattered,
All of them smart and no mistake
If that were all that mattered,
Yet each in some small detail errs
Which makes it not exactly hers.

But, though the labour be immense,
She'll light at last on something
That gratifies her inner sense,
And though it seems a rum thing
To clap upon the human brow
Deep calm is hers; she's all right now.

For though with us we merely buy
A grey, a brown, or blue hat
How should we know what blessings lie
For woman in a new hat?
It is for her a charm, a spell,
A mental state that makes all well.

It soothes, recuperates, and cheers,
And—mark the strange enigma—
E'en if her frock should be last year's
Eliminates that stigma;
It never fails to fill her cup
With deepfelt joy and buck her up.

Then bless the lady's quest, and bless
The hat she buys, and though it
May look like half-a-crown or less
And costs five guineas, blow it.
How could that sum be wiselier spent
Than on true peace and full content?

DUM-DUM.



COUNSEL AGAINST THE DEFENCE

SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS, K.C. (*Ex-Law Officer of the Crown, at Eastleigh, March* 14). "TO-DAY YOU HAVE THE MOST GLORIOUS OPPORTUNITY THAT THE WORKERS HAVE EVER HAD . . . REFUSE TO MAKE MUNITIONS, REFUSE TO MAKE ARMAMENTS."

Impressions of Parliament

Synopsis of the Week

***Monday, March 15th.*—Lords: Local Government (Financial Provisions) Bill given Second Reading. Empire Settlement Bill given Third Reading.**

Commons: Air Estimates Presented.

***Tuesday, March 16th.*—Lords: Debates on Decay of Countryside and Massacres at Addis Ababa.**

Commons: Army Estimates Presented.

***Wednesday, March 17th.*—Lords: Debate on Empire Trade.**

Commons: Tributes to Sir Austen Chamberlain.

Monday, March 15th.—As usual now, Spanish affairs dominated Question-time. Several Members who wished to know more about the camouflaging of the Spanish Government's arms-ship, *Mar Cantabrico*, as a British vessel were told by Lord CRANBORNE that the use of a neutral flag by a merchant ship to escape capture by an enemy was a ruse well established under international law.

The Air Estimates, which have risen this year to the vast sum of £82,500,000 from an average of £18,000,000 in pre-expansion years, were very clearly presented by Sir PHILIP SASSOON, who was able to tell the House that, in spite of delays due to shortage of labour and manufacturers' lack of experience of large-scale production, the R.A.F. was being enlarged so rapidly that in a few months there would be 124 squadrons in the Metropolitan Air Force. The supply of personnel was entirely satisfactory, he said. Two new guns, the Vickers and the Browning, had been introduced for use in the air; new types of aircraft were being ordered before their prototypes had been built—a risk which had been well worth taking; except for large naval machines, the biplane was dead. As for costs, the Air Ministry had the fullest right of inspection of manufacturers' books. On the civil side, the Empire Mail Scheme should come into operation at the beginning of 1938, and a revised system of meteorological stations was being organised.



THE PERI

["Peri: a fairy-like being in Persian mythology who directs the way to the celestial regions."—*Dictionary.*]

SIR PHILIP SASSOON

Mr. MONTAGUE, who spoke for the Socialists, doubted the sincerity of the Government's foreign policy and declared that offensive weapons played too large a part in the expansion programme; if the Government imagined that Englishmen would fight to keep mandated territories they must be mad.

In a sound maiden speech Mr. GRANT-FERRIS asked that the Auxiliary Air Force should be given more attention. Liberal support for the Estimates was promised by Sir HUGH SEELY, though he also promised that such enormous expenditure would receive careful examination; and Colonel MOORE-BRABAZON, deploring that ninety per cent. of the orders for engines had been divided between two firms, assured the House that if he were commanding an enemy raiding force he would only have to bomb two places, Derby and Bristol, to stop aircraft production.

Sir THOMAS INSKIP, who wound up the debate, deprecated references which had been made to a particular foreign country.

Tuesday, March 16th.—This afternoon the PRIMATE called attention to the reported massacres at Addis Ababa, explaining that he did so out of no wish to revive the strong feelings to which the Italian attack on Abyssinia had given rise, but because he hoped that the accounts had been exaggerated. When Lord PLYMOUTH told him that the Government had no further information than that given last week in the Commons, which substantiated the gravity of reports, he remarked that such events could not but have a serious effect on the opinion of the African peoples.

After Mr. CHAMBERLAIN had brought in a message from the KING placing his hereditary revenues at the disposal of the House, so that a new Civil List could be arranged, Mr. DUFF COOPER presented the Army Estimates in a convincing manner. These included a number of reforms, many of which have been pressed continually on the



ANY COMPLAINTS?
OR, BRIGHTENING UP THE ARMY

ABOUT THE MIDDLE OF MARCH THE PLANET MARS CAN BE CLEARLY SEEN, SHINING WITH INCREASING BRILLIANCY.



THE BUTTER CHAMPION

BEING MADE OF BEST EMPIRE BUTTER, THIS BUST WILL BE KEPT IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS REFRIGERATOR EXCEPT IN COLD WEATHER.



"So I said to the Royal Geographical Society there's something queer about this job. I've counted those volcanos twenty times and they always come out different."

Government by private Members and most of which, it must be admitted, are only surprising in that they have not already been adopted by a War Office suffering from a serious shortage of recruits. Four meals a day, butter in addition to margarine (this to the unconcealed joy of Mr. Griffiths, who has long demanded it), milk for boys, an increase in leave ration-allowance, no more stoppages from pay to cover equipment, a civilian staff for menial duties, and more luxurious barracks, were all items in the latest campaign to make army life attractive. As a further encouragement to recruits the Minister announced the offer by the Ministry of Labour of two more vocational training centres for men leaving the Army. His speech aroused no serious opposition.

Late in the evening the House was shocked to learn of the death of one of its oldest and most honoured Members, Sir Austen Chamberlain.

Wednesday, March 17th.—Lord Elibank, lately returned from a trade conference in New Zealand, raised in the Lords to-day the question of increasing reciprocal purchases within the Empire, and urged that the policy which should be pursued was that of "your own country first, the Empire second, and foreign countries last." With this view Lord Stonehaven and Lord Bledisloe agreed, the latter pointing out to what advantage capital could now be invested in New Zealand; and Lord Strathcona assured them of the Government's wish to promote inter-Imperial trade so far as other interests allowed. A plea was put forward by Lord Lothian that when improved defences justified us in guaranteeing the Dominions security of transport across the main oceans, the peace of the world demanded that the Empire should move away from the economic nationalism which had had such tragic results.



OUR BACK-BENCH *WHO'S WHO*

Again and again
Sir John Train
Had served the nation—
So last year he changed his station.

In a speech which affected the Commons deeply by its moving simplicity, Mr. Baldwin paid tribute to Sir Austen Chamberlain. Above all, he said, he had been a very great Parliamentarian, who had loved the House and its life; and his chief characteristic could best be summed up by the line: "He reverenced his conscience as his king." Kindness, loyalty and candour had been his in the truest sense. Mr. Baldwin concluded by saying that since Sir Austen had had an infinite faith in the Parliamentary system of this country there could be no better way of keeping his memory bright than by confirming the resolution that government of the people by the people should never perish on the earth.

Mr. Attlee, Sir Archibald Sinclair, Mr. Lloyd George, and Mr. Maxton followed with the tributes of their parties.

Silence

I FOUND my friend Pokewhistle rather listlessly clothing a bottle of sherry in a sort of rubber night-shirt.

"One goes on trying," he said, "but one fears that one's labour will be in vain. It is still my ambition to give a party in this so-called soundproof flat without getting a stiff letter from the landlord immediately afterwards. I have a theory that the so-called sound-proofing of flats rather magnifies than diminishes the noise. After my first party sixteen neighbours complained to the landlord, but I am gradually learning the technique of the thing, and after my fourth party (last Thursday) there were only five complaints."

I remarked that this seemed pretty good going, and Pokewhistle smiled wanly.

"You may be interested to hear," he said, "how this moderate success has been achieved. After my first party several of the complainants harped particularly in their letters (which the landlord was good enough to show me) upon the noise made by the stamping of boots upon the floor. Actually very little stamping took place, but apparently when a man of athletic build passes quietly across the room on tip-toe it sounds down below as though a herd of elephants were indulging in a Paul Jones. My wife solved this part of our problem by becoming a worshipper of the God Znu."

"The God Znu?" I queried.

"A figment of her imagination," said Pokewhistle airily. "She informed her guests that she had become a Znuist and that it was a tenet of Znuism that all shoes should be removed when one entered a room in which wine was to be drunk. The next party was therefore bootless, and complaints dwindled to a mere dozen, most of which seemed to harp upon the loudness of our voices. We tried to think of a plan for making our guests keep their voices to a mere whisper, and my wife dallied with the idea that I should pretend to be dead and lie during the whole evening flat on a couch with a lily clasped on my breast. She felt (perhaps with some justification) that this would induce a reverential hushfulness in our guests. Perhaps it was selfish of me, but I refused to participate in the deception. Deception of any kind is abhorrent to my nature, and anyway I felt that such a pose would prevent me entering fully into the spirit of the party.

"So we to some extent overcame the voice difficulty by inviting to our next party only such friends as happened to be suffering from laryngitis. At the time influenza was prevalent, and a satisfactory number of our friends were suffering from laryngitis as an after-effect. This plan reduced the number of complaints to nine, and a careful analysis of the letters revealed that the most disturbing noise was now the clink of glasses and bottles. We purchased a large quantity of rubber-sheeting and by judiciously folding this round everything clinkable we made such progress that the complaints were reduced to five. All five complaints dealt with the noise made when my wife ground her teeth on losing a trick at bridge.

"To-night she will wear a gag and I trust we shall come through the evening with a clean sheet. The laryngitis season being on the wane, we have invited only those friends who can talk in the deaf-and-dumb language; and though I scent a danger in the noise made by the cracking of our finger-joints, I am not entirely without hope."



"LOOK, AUNTIE—THAT'S MY FAVOURITE PUDDLE!"

At the Play

"THE ROAD TO ROME" (SAVOY)

THIS delightfully witty play, which has come into town from the Embassy, is the biting comment of an intelligent American on the futility of martial conquest, and while strict puritans (and, for that matter, strict historians) may not easily reconcile the racier details of its story with their consciences, as lovers of peace they will find in it many of their own conclusions most satisfactorily phrased.

Originally staged in 1926, when the practice of modern dictatorship was only in its infancy, the play has gained sadly in aptness with the passing of eleven years, and this revival seems justified at a time when the whole world is squandering its capital on arms, either in pursuance of or in answer to that arrogant nationalism which is the target for Mr. ROBERT SHERWOOD'S shafts.

As scene he takes Rome in 216 B.C., desperately embarrassed by HANNIBAL'S army, fresh from the rout at Trasimene, sitting at its gates. The Senate, terrified, grants dictatorial powers to a *Fabius Maximus* who is not the wary strategist of history but a pompous, complacent windbag overflowing with the canting humbug still popular with the political leaders of any successful military nation, but singularly unfitted to deal with an emergency. His wife, *Amytis*, who is a Greek and therefore not taken in for a moment by fat speeches about Imperial prestige, contributes the highly improper suggestion that instead of being slaughtered in a hopeless fight the Roman leaders should go and talk *Hannibal's* troubles over with him like reasonable men. This being naturally rejected, she rides out of the city under cover of night and contrives to get taken as a suspected spy to *Hannibal's* tent.

There, for two Acts, we are treated to the comedy of a shrewd and clear-headed woman undermining the self-confidence and shattering the most sacred convictions of a master of men. She does not scruple to use all her weapons, and by the morning she has made such hay of poor *Hannibal's* simple ideals that when *Fabius*, who has thought better of the hero's part, comes out to talk peace, Rome is spared annihilation and the Punic host, pretty angry at having tugged the elephants over the



A FRONT-BENCH ORATOR

Fabius . . . . MR. AUBREY DEXTER

Alps for nothing, is moved on. By then *Amytis* is in love with *Hannibal* and he with her; but she insists that he shall fight his new-found battle of the spirit by himself, and she remains, wretched, with *Fabius*.



EXPERIMENT IN HANNIBALISTICS

Amytis . . . . . MISS ENA BURRILL
Hannibal . . . . . MR. JAMES MASON

Apart from *Fabius*, who is drawn in caricature, Mr. SHERWOOD has dispensed as much as possible with exaggeration. His *Hannibal* is no swashbuckler but a quiet unassuming expert wrapped up in his job and convinced, until he meets *Amytis*, that his genius for leadership has been entrusted to him for the holy purpose of smashing Rome. (Entrusted by the gods. "By which gods?" asks *Amytis* innocently; "remember we have them too!") He had wondered sometimes whether there could be really a logical purpose in fighting more battles and killing more men, but his tradition was not to think but to act, and so he had never come near to grasping the fact that the shambles which marked his victorious path through Europe were in fact ordained to appease not the wrath of Heaven but merely the personal vanity of the *Fabiuses* of Carthage—in which, unfortunately, lay all the difference between the noble and the ridiculous. *Amytis*, devilishly skilful at presenting the disconcerting question under a cloak of womanly artlessness, leaves him not a shred of comfort except that at last he has woken up to what she calls the human equation.

Miss ENA BURRILL plays her with a fine understanding of the subtlety of the part, never forgetting that *Amytis* is falling deeply in love with *Hannibal* all the time that she is reducing his glory to ashes; and Mr. JAMES MASON'S *Hannibal* is excellent, a young man saddened by success and yet a credible leader. These two act very well together.

Fabius is taken broadly but on sound comic lines by Mr. AUBREY DEXTER; of the others, Mr. BECKETT BOULD'S *Hasdrubal*, Mr. DAVID TREE'S *Mago*, and Mr. CLARENCE BIGGE'S *Sergeant* are the best. The period sets and dresses are charming. The elephants are kept out of sight all the evening.

The moral of the play is that, as I have always held, even a forest of bayonets cannot stand up against the laughter of women. Soldiers are the most sensitive of men. If only all the totalitarian ladies could be induced to snigger whenever they saw a uniform, disarmament would be round the next corner. ERIC.

"Bats in the Belfry" (Ambassadors)

"In England the position of aunt is very well filled." So wrote the learned Frenchman Taine in the last century, when aunts were aunts and plentiful in the land. At the Ambassadors Theatre Miss Lilian Braithwaite may be seen, although in a present-day play, as one of the last but strongest of the breed, an aunt indefatigable and uninhibited, correcting everything that catches her vigilant eye in the conduct of numerous nephews and nieces. She is a high-spirited lady, and *Bats in the Belfry* is a high-spirited piece whose dramatists are not primarily interested in what their characters do but in the way in which they do it.

The scene is a vicarage with a very real vicar, completely removed from the typical stage clergyman, and his numerous and lively children, headed by a blackish sort of sheep, *Edward Morton*, the eldest son (Mr. Henry Kendall).

Most of the play is taken up with *Aunt Miranda's* attempts to stop what looks like a particularly foolish elopement on the part of *Edward* with young *Lady Carnworthy* (Miss Lydia Sherwood). Miss Sherwood is full of vitality and decision. Few actresses can make their shoulders and the carriage of the head so expressive, and we do not expect to see this *Lilla Carnworthy* accept the dictation of *Edward's* aunt. She does not do so, for *Aunt Miranda*, like many officious people, is quite capable of sudden dramatic reversals of policy. Her real success is in saving one of her nieces from an unsuitable marriage to a stockbroker (Mr. Michael Shepley). In an evening of almost unceasing laughter Mr. Shepley carried off a fine bag of the loudest laughs, for he and his friends represent a type which has succeeded the parson as the stock butt of theatrical humour. He has only to call out "Steady, the Buffs!" in moments when tempers are frayed for the audience to hail him with delight.

In a cast full of lively people, some of them, like the *Morton* daughters (Miss Vivien Leigh and Miss Lesley Wareing), immensely real and attractive, and some of them, like *Jerry Morton* (Mr. Charles Hawtrey), good farce characters, the Master of Gamaliel College, Oxford (Mr. Marcus Barron), plods and ponders importantly, but no attempt has been made to tap the springs of academic humour.



SHERRY FOR THE MASTER

The Master of Gamaliel College, Oxford . . . . Mr. Marcus Barron
Jessica Morton . . . . . Miss Vivien Leigh



A JOB FOR MIRANDA

Edward Morton . . . Mr. Henry Kendall
Lilla Carnworthy . . Miss Lydia Sherwood
Miranda Bailey . . . Miss Lilian Braithwaite

Throughout Miss Braithwaite carries a difficult part with a swift and easy mastery. She has a great many smart things to say, for the dialogue in this play is dangerously bright and epigrammatic, and it is thanks to her skill that an illusion of naturalness is for so long maintained. There are these irresponsible *Mirandas*—women who talk and invent the whole time, and startling remarks and epigrams come more easily from their privileged lips than from those of the more pedestrian males whose lives are being arranged and rearranged. D. W.

Appletreewick

In Domesday Book
The wise
May look
In search of
Apwltrevik;
And dalesmen they,
If asked
The way,
Direct you
To
Ap'trick.
But I will take
My pipe and stick
And make my way
To Appletreewick
In days when Wharfe's
Bare woods are quick
With promised burgeoning;
In days when, starred
About the vale,
The early primrose
Morning-pale
Is dewily
Blossoming;
And ev'ry blackbird
In the dale
Is fluting notes
That shower like hail
As though each cheerful
Rascal had
That moment learned
The trick,
And meant to practise
(I'll go bail)
His new love-tale,
His true love-tale,
And go a-courting—
Saucy lad!—
When he had got it
Slick!
Oh, spread the "coloured counties" out
And you can have
Your pick;
And some may praise
A Devon lane,
And some of Sussex sing;
But I will take
My pipe and stick
And make my way to
Appletreewick,
To Appletreewick
(That's Yorkshire way),
Through Burnsall Woods
In Spring! R. C. S.

Lines Written in Exasperation

(In the reported opinion of a West-End barber the moustache has had its day.)

WHAT news is this that shakes the town?
They surely cannot mean
That we must cast our whiskers down
And shave henceforward clean?
Must even I, for sickly fears
Of Fashion and her servants' sneers,
Present my darling to the shears
Before he has been *seen*?

Am I to end my mortal days
In unredeemed disgrace
And never learn what meed of praise
Salutes the hirsute race,
Nor hear them say, "He has forgot
His morning razor, has he not?"
Or even, "See, there is a spot
Of dirt upon his face"?

Not so: the unillumined herd
May, if it please them, laugh;
I nurse a purpose undeterred
By any vulgar chaff;
This slighted visage yet shall grow
Its genuine moustachio—
A thing of beauty, which may show
Up in a photograph.

For when the rolling years restore
The rule of Taste again,
The rising growths will sprout once more
To grace the lips of men;
As crowds that greet their ransomed king
On every face the blooms will spring—
And my delightful little thing
Should just be out by then.

Machine Age

BANKS had always seemed to me to vie with legal firms in a certain reputation for rigid conservatism, for conducting their affairs in the same way decade after decade. I used to think that, shall we say? the substituting of steel pens for quills early this century in the country branches of the Marble Arch and Rutland Bank was about on a par, as a reckless innovation, with the decision (made as a war-time economy) to use more daylight by cleaning the window of the senior partner's office in Messrs. Legge, Legge, Legge, Mutton & Legge, Solrs. and Comsrs. for Oaths. Now, however, I'm not so sure. Banks seem to be going all modern. There is a restless spirit abroad.

Not so long ago, for instance, they started to do away with the pass-book, that funny little volume that was sent to you, gravid with used cheques, whenever you felt strong enough to ask for it. In its way it wasn't such an unfriendly book. For even if what it told you wasn't a bit what you'd hoped, you could at least turn back to some earlier and happier chapter. There was always, for example, that thrilling passage in your financial autobiography when the income-tax people refunded you (yes, I said *refunded*) twenty-three pounds, seven shillings and fourpence: or even—very far back, this one, but lovely to look at—the place where the War Office discovered they still owed you an overlooked chunk of Wound Gratuity. But now all you get from the bank is a series of cold little bad-news-sheets which come in every month and are pretty soon used to light your pipe. A nasty innovation altogether.

Then, more recently, came another blow. On top of sending you those characterless sheets, the bank even began to do away with the familiar handwriting you knew so well. (Remember how you could always tell when dear old Fat-Nib Sprawling went on his summer holiday and Thin-Pen Sloping relieved him?) They actually began to go in for some sort of soulless mechanical typewriter.

Well, I'm afraid I don't like it at all. One had got so used to those hand-made hieroglyphics, particularly the ones that recurred with frequency. "Sylph," or "Beret"—I can't possibly imitate them here; it takes years of writing-up pass-books to get 'em right—were old friends. You at once knew you had drawn those particular cheques for yourself or to Bearer. An apparent payment to a Mr. S. C. Ullage-Cop was merely your electric-light account with Southern Counties Utility Corporation, and so on. It was really quite easy once you had got a line on the peculiarities of Fat-Nib Sprawling's style.

For a long while after my branch entered on its machine age, I sorely regretted the passing of the human touch. Then I tried to look on the bright side of it. At least I felt my wife would no longer be in a position to peer suddenly over my shoulder and ask in a cold tone who was this "Pamela Girdle" to whom I seemed to be making a regular quarterly payment, and refuse to believe for a long time that it was only the Postmaster-General's telephone account.

Unfortunately, however, it didn't seem to work out like that. Apparently old Fat-Nib Sprawling didn't know the first thing about typewriting and, overwhelmed with bitter regret for the nice thick pen which used to slide so flowingly over the paper, wasn't even bothering to learn. For the most amazing entries began to crop up in my pass-book sheets. If I cashed a cheque at the Heathen Club, as even a Brother-Heathen finds he has to do now and then, it would come out as GWAYGEM CLIP, and I hadn't the vaguest idea what it was meant to be. It was a long time before I even guessed at the real truth of the matter, namely, that poor Fat-Nib Sprawling, yearning for his long-lost pen, so hated the sight of his typewriter that he just punched viciously at the keyboard in the general direction of the letter he wanted and didn't really care whether he hit it or not. I at once went off and studied the keyboard of my own machine and slowly realised that the only bulls he had scored were on the A, the second E and the CL of Heathen Club. Wind or something had carried him off to the next letter on the left for the two H's and the first E, and to the right for the T, the U and the X; while by the final B he had got so mad he missed it by miles and was lucky, it seemed to me, to have kept on the machine at all.

As if all this wasn't bad enough, his form varied from day to day, or rather from cheque to cheque. As like as not he'd have improved a bit further down and would produce HEARHEN CLUK. Then he'd develop a bad pull and go right off the fairway every shot with GW@RGWB XKYV, or become unwittingly offensive with WASTERS CLUB.



GENT'S BATHING SUIT FOR EVENING WEAR.

There was no definite co-efficient of error, whereas before he relinquished the pen for the forefinger I at least could count on a fairly regular Heather Clad and knew where I was. Even the dear old Sylph cheques were likely to come out as SLEF or PELF.

It is all very confusing, and what is worse is an uncomfortable suspicion which has slowly been growing in my mind during the three or four months of my bank's machine-age. It is this: A letter miss-hit here and there or even everywhere doesn't make so much difference, but what about the *figure* columns? Can I be sure that SLEF really drew £6 on Nov. 20th? Mightn't it be only £4?; for a couple of keys to the left is nothing to Fat-Nib Sprawling, blinded with sorrow as he mourns his departed pen. Or shouldn't that payment from the editor for £10 really have been £100? I'm sure it was worth it. . . .

* * * * *

I have just rung up the bank to put the whole matter before them. They seem to think that they could type better from my cheques if I wrote more clearly *on* them. . . .

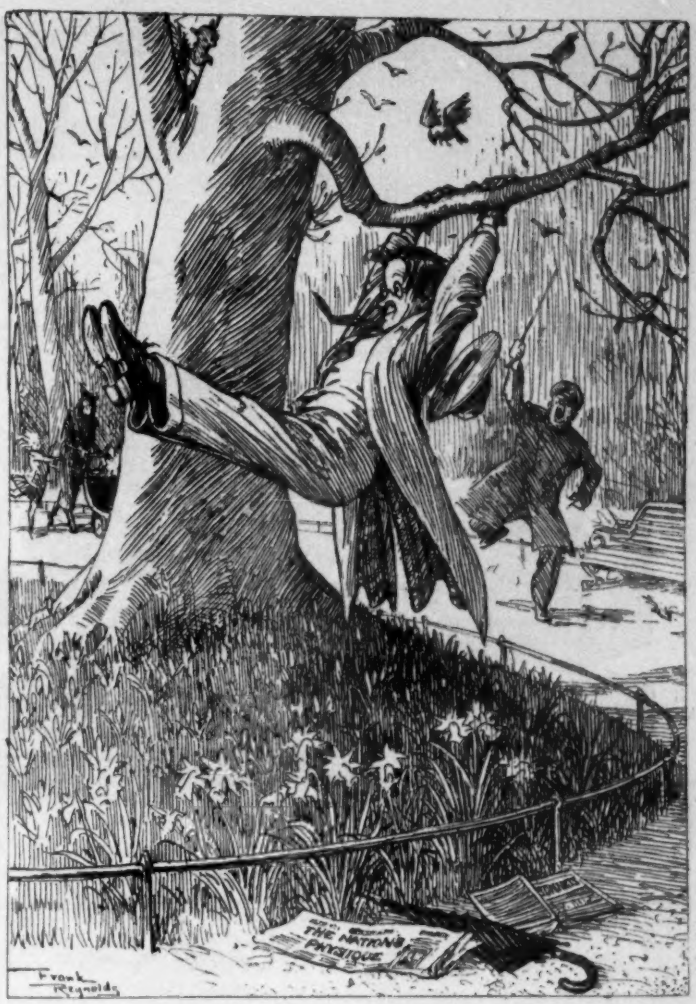
Queer! I never thought of that.

A. A.

My London Garden

March 15th.—Hopes run high in the spare-room, where the bowls of bulbs planted in the autumn stand on the window-sill. Evidently Nature intends to repay the debt incurred last September. The hyacinths are actually in bloom. Alas! very small, and a tiresome shade of pink instead of the glorious dark red anticipated. The outer leaves have become brown at the tips. Peabody thinks this is due to (*a*) watering too much, (*b*) watering too little. Cannot remember which. Took the bowl into sitting-room, but the clash of colour with Peabody's bowl of red hyacinths (bought last Saturday) very marked, so replaced in spare-room. A fine up-thrusting bud can now be discerned in the secret depths of one of the daffodils in the spare-room.

Peabody has really good selection of fresh cut flowers now, and prices are coming down. Have felt justified in buying sufficient to fill vases in every room (except spare-room). Cut flowers cannot of course compare with bulbs one has reared oneself in bowls planted last September, nor would one care to forgo the interest and pleasure to be derived from watching their growth.



FITTER POETS

And This Is——

My dear, here's Hugo Standish
Who writes surrealist verse
(How d' you do?),
And here's Prunella Brandish—
You've seen her play, *The Hearse*?
(How d' you do?).
You *must* meet Stella Marchant,
She paints on crêpe-de-chine
(How d' you do?),
And this is Billy Doodles
Who breeds the sweetest poodles;
And here is Martha Muttons
Who copies nudes on buttons
(How d' you do? How d' you do?),
And this is Mr. Green.

Ah! here comes Major Potter
Who killed a lion by hand
(How d' you do?),
And here is Phœbe Shotter
Whose books have all been banned
(How d' you do?).
You *must* meet Osbert Cholmondeley;
His wife's a native queen
(How d' you do?);
And here's Lavinia Gapers
Who edits twenty papers;
And this is Eddie Sangster
The celebrated gangster
(How d' you do? How d' you do?),
And—
That was Mr. Green.



"Do you play the Forcing Two?"
"More often the Yielding One."

Change of Scene

Old Mr. Biddlemarsh has been up to London. London may not know it, but there he was yesterday, riding like any lord in Mr. Pink's ancient two-seater.

"Seventy-five years I bin a-messin' around they 'orses, an' I needs a change," he said when Mr. Pink asked him. "Gettin' set in me ways, me daughter tells me. I'll come. I'll show 'un."

Mr. Biddlemarsh has been a carter and general odd-job man ever since the War; but before that, years ago, he drove the Squire's old carriage-horse, Joey. "Joey, now, 'e were a 'orse as was a 'orse, 'e were."

Carriage-horses, plough-horses, cart-horses have been Mr. Biddlemarsh's whole life till yesterday's great journey. When we heard he was going up every-one in East Weak felt personally interested. We were all very keen that he shouldn't miss anything. Mrs. Jones, whose nephew's cousin's uncle is a Beefeater, begged him to see the Tower at all costs. Mrs. Brough, who runs Our Dumb Friends League, wrote down the address of the Zoo and the Natural History Museum for him, and pinned it under the lapel of his coat. The Rector strongly advised him to make a point of visiting St. Paul's and Westminster, and the schoolmaster managed just in time to get him a ticket from our Member for the House of Commons. It seemed a great day for East Weak. It isn't every village that can send a man of seventy-five to see London for the first time in his life these days.

When he came back that evening everyone was there to meet him. The old man looked tired but very happy.

"Did you see the Tower . . . Zoo . . . Museum?" we asked.

"You enjoyed your first sight of Westminster, I hope?" said the Rector.

"Did you see the Prime Minister?" asked the schoolmaster.

Mr. Biddlemarsh took the drink that was ready for him and nodded his head slowly.

"Ah, I shouldn't wonder if I did; I seen a power of sights," he said. "I seen more pigeons than ever I seen before in my born days."

"Trafalgar Square, I suppose?" said Mrs. Brough.

"No, it weren't neither," stated Mr. Biddlemarsh decidedly. "I knows that—for why? Because it were there I seen two grey 'orses a-pullin' a load o' beer-barrels as beat any I've 'andled, leavin' out old Joey. Ah, a fine pair they was! Don't know as ever I seen a finer. I says to Mr. Pink when I sees them, I says, 'If I'd a-knowed London was like this, now, I'd a-come afore,' I says. 'It's a real pleasure to me,' I says, 'to see them 'orses.'"

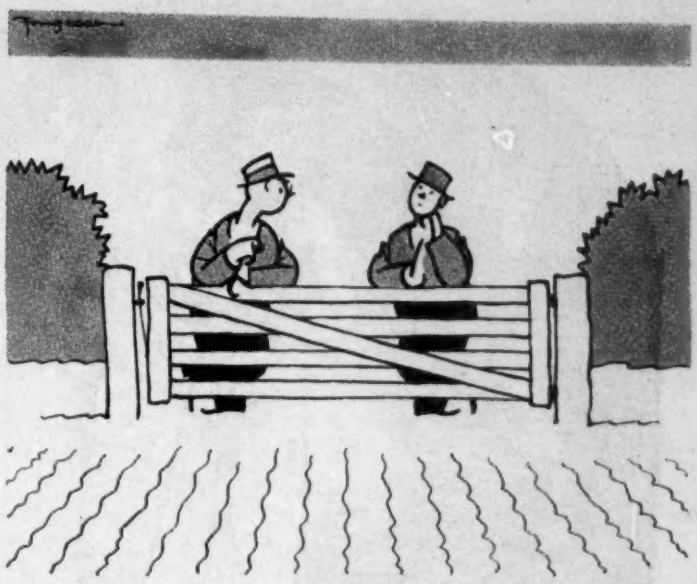
Sussex Silhouettes

Above the Ditchling road
Where the blanket of the down tucks
in each field
And the curly-greens lie like quilting,
We came upon two windmills tilting
With tipsy art,
And neither one would yield
His foolishly revolving swords and
shield.

Our road curved left to Firle.
The windmills changed their shapes
against the sun,
The very nature of their fighting
Seemed to alter in the new lighting;
They fell apart,
And soon the stouter one
Was menacing the other with a gun.

The victim, powerless
Against this sudden onslaught, stood
in fright,
His swords, grown infinitely slender,
Raised helplessly in mute surrender.
Shot through the heart
He toppled out of sight
Just as the inattentive road turned
right.

O. D.



"I HEARD A CUCKOO JUST NOW."
"MUST HAVE BEEN A CUCKOO-CLOCK."
"NO, IT WASN'T."
"HOW DO YOU KNOW?"
"BECAUSE IT SAID 'CUCKADOODLEOO.'"

Masterpiece

For his latest book Mr. Joe Josephine—surely the most promising of our younger writers—has left romance for autobiography. Those who know his earlier work, notably those fine novels, *Purple Lies the Petal-dust* and *Her Eyelids Shut*, expect a lot from Mr. Josephine. They will not be disappointed.

In *Women I Have Waved To* he draws upon personal experience, and the result is a remarkable piece of work. He has been brutally frank. He has spared no one's feelings, least of all his own. As the title suggests, he makes no secret of the fact that he is addicted to waving. From his teens he has revelled in it, and without shame or the slightest hint of false modesty he tells us all.

As he says in the Introduction to his book:—

"I can remember the first time it happened. We were coming up the field from rugger. A handful of young women who had been watching the game were clustered against the school railings. Quite suddenly the desire to wave swept over me in a hot ruby tide. Hardly realising what I was doing, I raised my hand and waved. Then, too shaken by emotion to see if my wave were returned, I fled into the dressing-room and, pressing my face upon the games-master's shoulder, burst into tears."

If after reading this episode the reader is tempted to doubt if Mr. Josephine's later experiences can possibly attain the same intensity of feeling he has only to scan a few pages to be amply reassured. Incident after incident is poured out at bewitching pace. Take but one further example. The author is at Bournemouth convalescing from injuries received as a result of his last adventure—the husband of the woman he had waved to had caught him waving. He is lying on the hot beach in the sun.

"I was lying on my back on the warm sand. Tiny waves tinkled at my feet as they broke, scattering sapphires to the sun. My mind was wandering in idle boredom when in a flash something urged me to look up—some instinctive command. I lifted my head and there, not ten yards from the water's edge, a yacht glided. A woman was at the tiller. Set at an angle on her blonde curls was a white sailor-hat. She smoked a cigarette. Spellbound, I waited. Without drawing a breath I waited. And she waved. The old fire swept through me. I lifted my hand and signalled in reply. In a few moments she was gone, but those moments had yielded LIFE. *She had waved! She had waved! I wanted to dance there on the sand."*

Mr. Josephine has waved to women from one end of the British Isles to the other. Appledore, Burnham Beeches, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Stoke Poges, Symonds Yat, Walberswick, Wigan—through the geographical alphabet he has waved his way, and now has paused to let us share his experiences. Nor has his waving been confined to this country. There is a chapter entitled "Waving on the Continent," in which he describes his adventures on a Cook's Tour—how he waved to a woman he thought was a Lapp in Finland, who turned out to be the charlady of the vicarage at home, must be read to be believed.

Women I Have Waved To has its place on the shelf of every student of human nature. Waving between the sexes is a phenomenon which has received but scant attention from the psychologist. FREUD barely touches upon it. But now that Mr. Josephine has set the ball rolling the matter may at last receive the attention it warrants.

Mr. Josephine has broken the ice to our reserve. More strength to his arm.



"So I says to him, 'Go! An' the sooner I never sees your face no more the better it 'll be for both of us when we meet.' An' go he did!"

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Not Like Some

The five studies in late-Victorian biography assembled by Mr. Shane Leslie in *Men Were Different* (Michael Joseph, 12/6) exhibit a common expansiveness of personality which, while chronologically coupled with England's material development, is as often as not in spiritual opposition to it. There is something of the free-lance in all five heroes, and the couple who go more or less with the stream are both found in comparative backwaters. First comes that masterpiece of contrariety, Randolph Churchill; then Augustus Hare, compiler of guide-books; Arthur Dunn of football fame—an unusually humane schoolmaster; George Wyndham, prince of political romantics, and Wilfrid Blunt, first spokesman of small nations. Personal insight added to historical acumen enliven the execution of these portraits. The first depicts the writer's godfather, the fourth and fifth portray two of his literary idols, while the third was headmaster of his Prep. Only Hare—whose penchant for picturesque gossip is remuneratively congenial—was personally unknown. All are sympathetically handled—in the case of Churchill, whose "pedestal was broken . . . in his own lifetime," the reconstruction strikes me as too high for stability. But Blunt, "chief public nuisance" of his day, receives an admirable tribute.

In at the Death

It would take, I think, the fiendish ingenuity of a newspaper syndicate to discover that a highly sensitive man was the ideal reporter of crimes of violence, public executions and the wars that blend in so grandiose a fashion the best-selling elements of both. This at any rate atttracted the United Press to Mr. Webb Miller, whose sincere and horrible story of a correspondent's career is admirably told in *I Found No Peace* (Gollancz, 12/6). Michigan, Chicago and Mexico got him going; the Great War saw him in London carving his initials on the bloater that, untouched, reappeared on his breakfast-table. France convinced him of the "obscenity and futility" of war; Ireland of the Sinn Feiners followed; he saw Riffs bombed in Morocco, Afridi tribesmen on the Indian frontier; and found the Italian grab for Abyssinia—at first bitterly resented—no worse than any other piece of historical piracy save that it broke the heart of a new hope. Confronting deliberate terrorism in Spain, he attributes the shipwreck of civilisation to the world's preference for machinery to personal liberty, and ends—with loathing and depression—on the sides being picked for the next war.

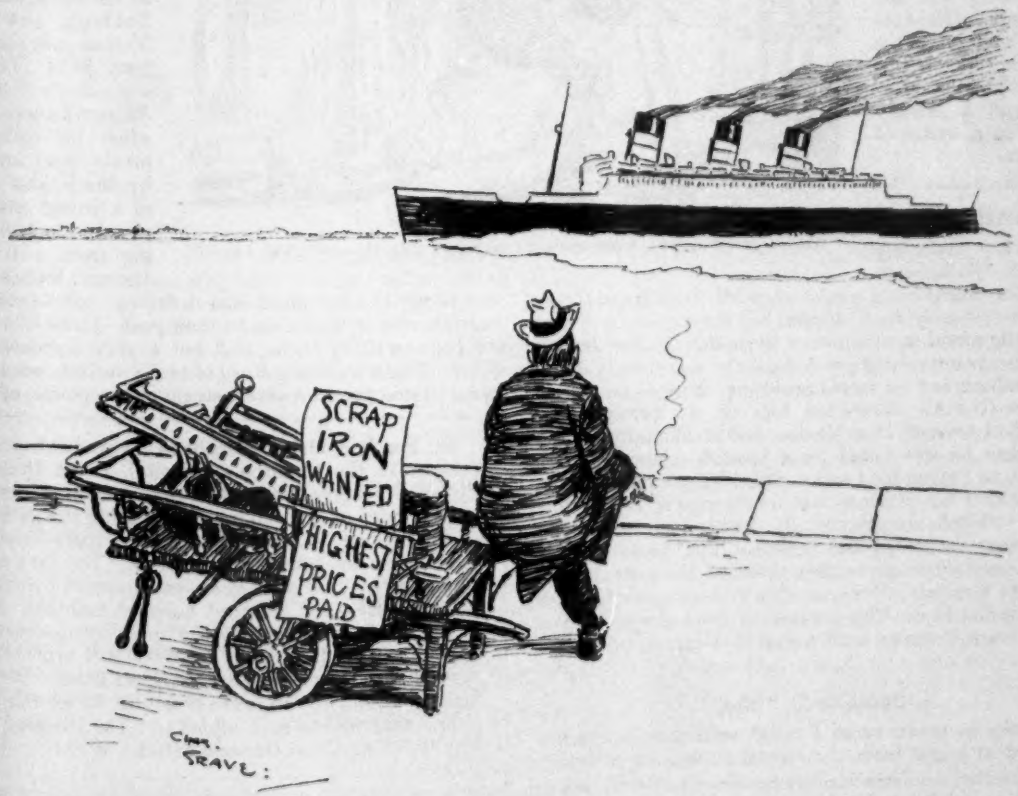
A Writer Looks Back

Mr. H. A. Vachell's *Distant Fields* (Cassell, 12/6) is the autobiography of a man contentedly past his youth who, surveying the three-quarters of a century so far

vouchsafed to him, recalls his experiences and comments, never heavily, on the many changes he has seen. His range is wide. After Harrow and Sandhurst, it extends from California to the Beefsteak Club and the Garrick, including a lengthy sojourn in the New Forest and, up to the present, a shorter one in his present home in Bath. He has run a ranch, written many plays and more books, acquired a deep knowledge of wine, gone in thoroughly for sport, and must have played pretty nearly every game from polo to tiddly-winks. He has worked hard and played hard, and the wonder is that he has managed to get it all into the time. Though troubles have naturally come his way, his life has had many blessings, not the least of which is a house known as the Gem of Bath, where he has elected to spend the afternoon of his days. The chapters devoted to his theatrical friends and doings will no doubt be the most popular part of the book. But it is all as easy to read as one of his own novels, and a highly characteristic feature is to be found on the jacket, which bears the picture of a room, presumably in his home, and in the place of honour a hospitable bottle and what looks like a box of cigars on a table worthy of such things.

A Poet Goes Verserk

Don't blow that six bob on hashish!
You'd do much better to put it into OGDEN NASH'S
The Primrose Path,
A commodity not only far fuller of potential hahath,
But also embellished, in a way which would bring the most serious-minded dog low,
By our dear old friend SOGLOW.
JOHN LANE is the purveyor
Of this inexpensive keepthedoctorawayer.
NASH'S verse can be as orthodox
As a deb.'s frox,
But generally he chooses the oddest moments to say when
To his pen,
And even the Bloomsbury boys with spiders in their hair would have committed most of his rhymes
To the flymes.
But who cares about that (except the literary uncleandauntage),
Seeing that he puts his tricks to such extraordinarily good advantage,
Being on one page a mordant satirist
And on the next a philosophic whattheheckdoesitmatterist
Who often thinks up notions so ridiculous
That they make the gloomiest cackle till they feel pleasantly siculous.
Well, I for one am infernally sorry it
Can't be fixed up, owing to a lot of nonsense about nationality, for him to be our Deputy-Laureate,
For I'm positive he'd earn his whack
Of sack.



DREAMS

A Sorry Scheme of Things

From a novel called *Very Heaven* (HEINEMANN, 7/6) and written by Mr. RICHARD ALDINGTON the experienced reader will know roughly what to expect. For Mr. ALDINGTON is given to irony. To be young, for *Chris Heylin*, was indeed something very like the other Principality of the Beyond: not lacking a crazy pavement of good intentions, which included the redemption of mankind through anthropology. Misfortune dogged him from the day on which a promising University career was truncated by the financial *débâcle* of his deplorable parents to that on which he passes from our ken, deciding against suicide and propounding his philosophy with a verbosity which did not desert him even on the brink of bliss. Some of his disasters might obviously have been avoided by the exercise of a little more tact and amenity, for he was a singularly ill-mannered young man, but he was undeniably unlucky in his contacts. It is a weakness of his author's indictment of society that he presents its members as being almost without exception either crooks, morons or both. Several of the figures in this book are mere grotesques, and the trick by which *Mrs. Heylin* tries to land *Chris* in prosperous matrimony is an almost inconceivable piece of maternal panderism. The honesty of Mr. ALDINGTON's indignation is to be respected, but he often displays a petulance and a crudity curious in a writer of his years.



"WOULD IT INTERFERE WITH YOUR SUNSET IF I WAS TO LIGHT THE LAMP?"

An Uninvited Guest

Perilous Sanctuary (HARRAP, 7/6) has completed two-thirds of its course when Mr. D. J. HALL states, quite superfluously, that "Bowles had never questioned very deeply the moral significance of his actions." For *Bowles*, who is always interesting psychologically, was already shown to be undisturbed by moral problems. Serious trouble in Houston (U.S.A.) compelled him to fly precipitately, and he had reached New Mexico, and incidentally his last gasp, when he was found by a Spanish landowner, *Don Santiago*, and given food and shelter. Very soon, however, he knew that his presence was unwelcome in this remote village. Flagellants (graphically depicted on the book's jacket) were numerous and fanatical, and while engaged in their penitential orgies they resented the arrival of an inquisitive stranger. Moreover *Don Santiago* was far from being a genial host. This portrait of *Bowles*, whether you like it or not, is drawn with a skill that cannot be denied.

A Publisher's "Shop"

For once in many years I could wish that I was not interested in books from the special angle of a reviewer, for then I should be able to judge better how wise, from the general reader's point of view, Mr. CHRISTOPHER MORLEY has been in publishing *Streamlines* (FABER, 7/6). It is a collection of papers, short and very short, dealing with a variety of subjects, and among them are many which are so obviously the outcome of his special interests that I feel they would have been more at home in one of those little trade booklets produced by publishers. The essays, which are not purely literary too, are often so intimately American as to miss fire with an English reader. Such papers as "Broadway Limited," a fine account of a night journey on a big engine, or a discourse on "Style" might enchant any reader, for Mr. MORLEY has a vivid pen and can coin a memorable phrase; but some of them, in which a good deal of back-patting is bestowed on more or less important figures in American publishing and book-selling are a different matter. Mr. MORLEY is so good at his best that the exploitation of his gifts on "shop" is all the more annoying.

A-Hunting You May Go

To those who enjoy a romantically adventurous chase after treasure I recommend *The Screaming Lake* (ROBERT HALE, 7/6), with Mr. S. FOWLER WRIGHT as master of the hunt. Setting out from Manaos and playing a lone hand, *Devereux* was already finding the Amazon an impediment when his embarrassments were increased by the sudden arrival of a young and white woman who was escaping from a tribe of Indians. Her wardrobe was scanty but her pluck was unfailing, and together she and *Devereux* struggled on to their goal. There they found the Inca awaiting them; and not a very agreeable Inca either. This is a stirring story of perils and escapes, though its conclusion placed a severe strain on my powers of belief.

Mr. Punch and his readers have always felt a special interest in the Children's Hospital, Great Ormond Street. For eighty-five years it has been fighting the pain and suffering of sick children, by treating the patients of the moment—a thousand of them daily—and by research for the benefit of the future. But for a long time now this vital work has been hampered by badly-planned, dark and cramped hospital buildings; and lack of funds is holding up the great reconstruction scheme started last year. £240,000 will provide the urgently needed medical and surgical block. It is a large sum, but we can make it smaller by sending the cheque that we can each afford to "The Hospital for Sick Children, Great Ormond Street," W.C.1.

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Charivaria

A CENTENARIAN attributes his long life to the possession of a keen sense of humour. Of course he who laughs lasts.

★ ★ ★

An American scientist doubts whether there are any evidences of a lost race in England. He can't have looked in the Stop Press.

★ ★ ★

"What does it mean when a man dreams he has given his wife a pearl necklace?" asks a correspondent. It usually means that he is more generous asleep than awake.

★ ★ ★

Not long ago a play was withdrawn from a London theatre after one performance. There was, we understand, a good attendance of well-known last-nighters.



★ ★ ★

A reader has written to his newspaper stating that his cook spends most of her time poring over an English grammar. This is no doubt Nature's reply to the public-school policeman.

★ ★ ★

"Henry Hall to leave the B.B.C. when he goes on tour," announces a headline. This is a bad set-back to those who were hoping that he would take it with him.

★ ★ ★

"A man should put his foot down hard when his wife starts to tell him what to do," we are told. On the brake or the accelerator?

★ ★ ★

An M.P. states that he has never been in one of his constituency's 160 public-houses. He doesn't mention which one it is.

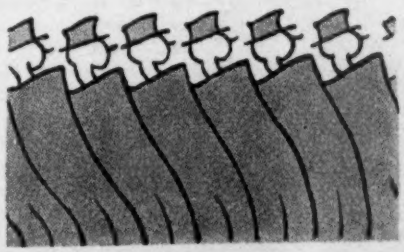
★ ★ ★

One of our readers bemoans the lack of really big figures in the Commons nowadays. He must learn to wait patiently for the Budget.

★ ★ ★

"It is silly to make a song about ribbon development," says a writer. Especially if it's entitled "I By-passed Your Window."





An American paper says that the famous Quins are to be coached in all branches of sport as soon as they are old enough. They should be well-nigh unbeatable at Fives.

★ ★ ★

A lady told a judge recently that she married her husband just because of a theory that she had. Unfortunately her theory refused to work.

★ ★ ★

"While walking across Trafalgar Square I observed a distinguished-looking man slip on a banana-skin," writes a policeman. He was of course one of the landed gentry.

★ ★ ★

An American film-actor is being criticised for refusing to wear a beard in the part of CHARLES PARNELL. Having undertaken to play an historical part he should certainly be ready to take the rough with the smooth.



★ ★ ★

A farmer in the interior of Australia has been discovered who had never heard of HITLER or MUSSOLINI. It is suggested that his effigy should be placed beside theirs in Madame TUSSAUD'S.

★ ★ ★

A man employed by a London gas company complains that housewives will not let him into their houses because they don't believe he has come to read the meter. Others, again, won't let him in because they believe he has.

★ ★ ★

"I derived a lot of amusement from the National Gallery," says an Australian visitor. This is surprising, because there aren't any joke captions under the pictures.

★ ★ ★

It will come as a relief to readers to learn that Treasury scrutiny of Government expenditure is so strict that it refuses to accept the inevitable unless it is checked by at least two responsible officials.

★ ★ ★

"Travel broadens you," reads an advertisement. Not, perhaps, in the rush hour.

The Right of the Road

To the Editor of "Punch"

SIR,—I am, I flatter myself, a mild man, not prone to rush into controversial print. But I feel that the time has come when every free-born Briton must take up arms in defence of his rights in this matter of the use of the roads. I, for one, am sick of being dragooned by authority, bullied by bureaucracy, denounced by dictators, and intimidated by an insignificant minority. I, Sir, am a member of the public and a taxpayer. As such I have a right to a peaceful and unobstructed use of the roads of this country. But do I get it? I do not. If I go out on foot on to these roads which my money has built, I am intimidated, endangered and bullied by motorists and cyclists—a small minority of upstarts who are little better than murderers. If I go out in my car on these roads which have been built out of the exorbitant taxes I pay on my car, I am incommoded at every turn by fools of pedestrians and cyclists, whose one object in life is to commit suicide under my wheels. And if in despair I take to my cycle I am invariably run over by a hogging motorist when swerving to avoid a moon-gazing pedestrian.

I therefore feel that it is high time that we members of the public banded ourselves together against this triple menace. Our enemies have already realised the value of unity. There are motorists' associations, pedestrians' associations and cyclists' associations, all ready to rush forward with the special pleading and the absurd demands of their own little group, and all receiving special consideration from the authorities. But we, the public, are dumb. We allow these people and their allies, the MINISTER OF TRANSPORT and the police, to snatch our rights from us without a murmur. As the late Mr. CHESTERTON might have said:—

We are the Public of England,
And we have not spoken yet.
Honk at us, fine us, hound us,
But do not quite forget.

I therefore give below a rough draft of the demands which I, as first President and Founder of the Public Association, propose to lay before the MINISTER OF TRANSPORT. They may not be to the taste of motorists, cyclists or pedestrians, and I anticipate the usual uproar from these highly vocal minorities. But this is surely a case in which the interests of the public must come first.

(1) The roads belong to the public. Motorists, cyclists and pedestrians may in certain circumstances be tolerated, but they will be heavily taxed and will be required to observe strict speed-limits and to keep to certain stated tracks specially provided for them.

(2) Members of the public travelling in motor-cars have a perfect right to drive at any speed and on any part of the road they please. Cyclists or pedestrians impeding members of the public in motor-cars will be liable to heavy fines. It goes without saying that since they own the roads members of the public travelling in motor-cars may leave their cars anywhere for as long as they like, with or without parking lights, depending upon the state of their batteries.

(3) Members of the public riding bicycles naturally take precedence over motorists and pedestrians. Motorists must in no circumstances pass members of the public on bicycles, and it is the duty of pedestrians to keep out of their way. Members of the public on bicycles need carry no lights, need not touch the handle-bars of their machines unless they so desire, and are only limited in numbers which may ride abreast by the width of the road. After all, they *paid* for the roads.

(4) Members of the public on foot, whilst permitting motorists and cyclists to use their roads, may naturally insist:—

(*a*) That neither shall travel at more than ten miles an hour.

(*b*) That if and when a member of the public on foot wishes to stop and ruminate in the middle of the road, motorists and cyclists shall at once stop and shall not proceed until motioned to do so.

(*c*) That in no circumstances shall motorists and cyclists invade quiet lanes, beauty spots, built-up areas, towns or the country. These are strictly reserved to the public.

(*d*) That motorists and cyclists shall not be permitted to leave their vehicles on the roads under any pretext.

(*e*) That at night all vehicles shall silently give clearly audible warning of approach, and have bright easily-seen lights, which at the same time do not spoil the nice darkness.

I am aware, Sir, that these are severe regulations, which might drive motorists, cyclists and pedestrians off the road. But obviously something drastic must be done to show these people that the public's will is supreme. Moreover, as has been recently shown in the Press, the financial advantage of such an arrangement would be enormous. The MINISTER OF TRANSPORT has stated that a car parked in the streets of London occupies space worth £20,000, and another writer has replied pointing out that a stationary pedestrian occupies space worth £1,600. Surely in the face of these figures the remedy is clear? Abolish motorists. Abolish pedestrians. Sell the valuable space which they were occupying and divide the money amongst the public.

I look to you, Sir, to use your influence. Rouse the public. Stir up the public. Make the public realise its strength. And in a few years we shall pass into a blessed haven where motorists, cyclists and pedestrians are a distant memory, and the public will have regained its ancient right to wriggle along the roads on its stomach.

Yours faithfully,
PRO BONO PUBLICO.



"I'M SORRY IF MY TRIANGLE DISTURBS YOU, BUT MY MEDICAL MAN TELLS ME I WAS STARVED FOR MUSIC."



"AREN'T THEIR STATUES WONDERFUL?"

(MR. PUNCH'S SIMPLE SUGGESTION FOR PREVENTING ANY MALTREATMENT OF THE FIGURE OF EROS IN PICCADILLY CIRCUS.)



THE FIRST TROUSERS

"MUMMY, CAN I CALL DAD 'HENRY' NOW?"

The Roundabout Ram

["A ram charged four players on the seventh green of Dungannon golf links, co. Tyrone. The golfers vainly tried to beat off the animal with their clubs. They then took refuge behind a large beech-tree, around which the ram continued to chase them."
News Item.]

If ye come to Dungannon in County Tyrone
There's golfing to fit ye like flesh to the bone;
There's holes that will test ye for putting and swing;
Of all that's in Europe our seventh's the king!
Ye must watch what ye're at or ye'll surely be done,
No slicin' nor pullin' but sthraight as a gun;
Ye must fetch it the divil an' all of a slam,
Kape clear of the trees an'—look out for the Ram!

There was four fellys came to th' seventh one day—
'Twas months ago now—bein' new to the play.
One, sendin' his second far out to the west
An' sthrikin' the ram where he lay at his rest,
Dishgruntled that thruculent father of sheep,
Who got to his feet—an' he mad as a sweep!
The gentlemen, they bein' sthrangers an' all,
Went innocent on for to look for the ball.
The Ram hid in ambush, an' then, seein' red,
He up wit' his hunkers an' down wit' his head!
It's not an adventure ye'd go for to seek
Is bull-fightin' rams at the end of a cleek;
The biggest of brassies is less than your need;
A niblick is nothing to boys of that breed.
And a puck on the tail is no joke from a ram;
So the gentry discrately decided to scram.

It's a natural fact that a human in flight
Will head for the sthrongest of cover in sight.
Now the only bitteen of protection in reach
Was the massive and merciful bole of a beech;
So over the fairway, they runnin' like ants,
The horns a bare fut from the slack o' their pants;
They got to the tree, but they hadn't him bet,
He was afther thim still—*an' he's afther thim yet!*
They're ringin' that tree like a firework, bedam,
An' round an' around goes the Roundabout Ram!

Of races at Wembley who cares for to speak—
On bikes, an' they circlin' the full of a week?
An aisy procession that is, to compare
Wit' thim roun' the tree makin' sthreaks in the air!
There's four flyin' hooves an' four stout pairs o' boots,
They are cuttin' a thrench in the earth at the roots!
When JOSHUA walked about Jericho Town
He blew on a ram's horn an' brought the place down;
Now, loud as the thrumpets that marched out of Ham,
Wind sings in the horns of the Roundabout Ram.
Sure, sooner or later, that beech-tree will fall
An' the gentry be left wit' no cover at all;
An' when that ould ram gets to buttin' his fill
He'll think it's his birthday—begob, an' he will!

Oh, of iligant golfin' the crame an' the jam
Is our natural hazard, the Roundabout Ram!

Poison Pen

To the Editor of "Punch."

DEAR SIR,—May I suggest that at this time of rejoicing and goodwill a little of the holiday spirit should be extended in a direction where censure and, I fear, abuse are only too rife?

Sir, all over the country during the last week thousands have been bidding a temporary farewell to their schools; and inevitably all over the country schoolmasters will shortly be sitting down to pen those documents which bring in their train so much sorrow and domestic strife. I am referring—need I say?—to School Reports.

I feel very strongly about Reports. There seems to me to be a deplorable lack of sympathy about the whole business. Take my last Half-Term Report. My first eager unsuspecting glance made me recoil with disgust and contempt:—

"FRENCH. *Works better when awake.*"



There you have sarcasm at its cheapest and nastiest. I could reply with just as much truth, "Ditto when sober."

It's all so unnecessary.

I occasionally have the privilege of looking at my sister's Reports. There is all the difference in the world. An atmosphere of benignity and sympathy pervades the whole document. A searing sentence like "*Works better when awake*" would be simply inconceivable on the same page. In this case the remark would become at once:—

"Eulalie lets her imagination run away with her at times; but her French should improve."

There you are, you see. One has immediately a delightful impression of pages of riotously imaginative French prose. Again: "*Her French should improve.*" Well, so should mine.

Besides, the Christian name puts the whole thing on a charmingly chatty basis. I mean, instead of one's housemaster writing:—

"He is uniquely lazy and undistinguished,"

he could so easily translate it to—

"Julian is a little too ready to stand aside and allow others to pass him,"

adding of course—

"but he should grow out of this."

Report-writing, in fact, should be studied much more as an art. Every conscientious form-master should make it his business to know useful little facts about his pupil's parents. If the father is a commission agent or has a horse in for the Derby, then he should at once show that he realises the fact. Thus:—

"GENERAL REMARKS ON INDUSTRY, ETC.

Reginald is a stayer, and, though lying fifth at the turn, I fancy him for a place. Altogether a likely colt."

Or again, another case. The father is a financier:—

"Not yet a going concern. Slumped badly in May, and registered a sharp decline again in early June. A little firmer since then, and, though quoted as low as 19 *at one time, has closed at* 14. *Too fluctuating for a satisfactory security."*

The last sentence in particular does not sound half as crushing as the *"volatile and quite unreliable"* (Michaelmas, 1935) or the *"prolonged bouts of idleness"* (a sally from the Spring of '36) which my form-master would perpetrate in the circumstances.

Similarly, to a motor-magnate the blow of a son's shortcomings could be softened by homely and familiar language. For example:—

"Acceleration not impressive, and rather a low cruising speed. Perhaps only firing on five cylinders."

But I feel I have illustrated my point sufficiently. Let us hope, then, Sir, for a new—a less hidebound and a more imaginative—era in Reports.

Yours faithfully,

REMOVE, MI.



"'ERE, AFTER HIM, GEORGE—YOU 'RE DUMMY!"

The Eggs of Columbus

My aunt said she could only see one difficulty about having a children's party in the Easter holidays—and one quite realised what a conservative estimate that was, knowing Aunt and the children and the house and the garden and the servants as one does.

"What are they going to do?" said Aunt, speaking rather earnestly. "If it was summer they would be out-of-doors, and if it was winter, naturally they'd be indoors. But Easter never seems to be either one thing or the other."

I agreed that it didn't; but the children would have to be either one thing or the other. Definitely they must be either indoors or out-of-doors. It couldn't be both and it couldn't be neither.

Laura said they could be indoors for tea and out-of-doors for the Easter-egg hunt.

"All over the garden," she observed spaciously.

I said—not meaning to sound surprised, although feeling it—that an Easter-egg hunt was a brilliant idea.

"It gives them something to do," replied Laura modestly.

It gave us something to do too.

My aunt and Laura failed—as has happened to them before—to view the situation with the same eye.

If Laura said that, whatever happened, we mustn't hide the eggs in easy places or they'd all be found immediately, Aunt asserted that at all costs the hiding-places mustn't be too difficult or the poor dear children wouldn't ever find them at all.

And when Aunt suggested that the egg-hunt ought to take place all over the house, excepting her own bedroom, Laura immediately replied that eggs *could* only be hidden out-of-doors.

"Look at Nature," she said in a rather eloquent kind of way. "Who in the world would ever expect to see hens and birds and things laying eggs in the house?"

Aunt agreed that nobody would, but added that if you were only going to hide eggs or anything else in places where people *expect* to find them there didn't seem to be much point in hiding them at all.

"Then the whole party," said Laura, "is ruined."

Aunt's reply simply consisted of a long full reference to a very unfortunate no-trump hand played by Laura just before Christmas.

When we got back again to the Easter eggs, one had sent the children upstairs to tidy themselves before the party, and the rain seemed to have stopped, and Charles had come in and said that nobody was to hide anything whatever in the study, far less look for anything there and turn the place upside-down, and that the garden was good enough for anybody, only they must be kept right off the flower-beds, the tennis-court, and the piece of gravel in front of the steps.

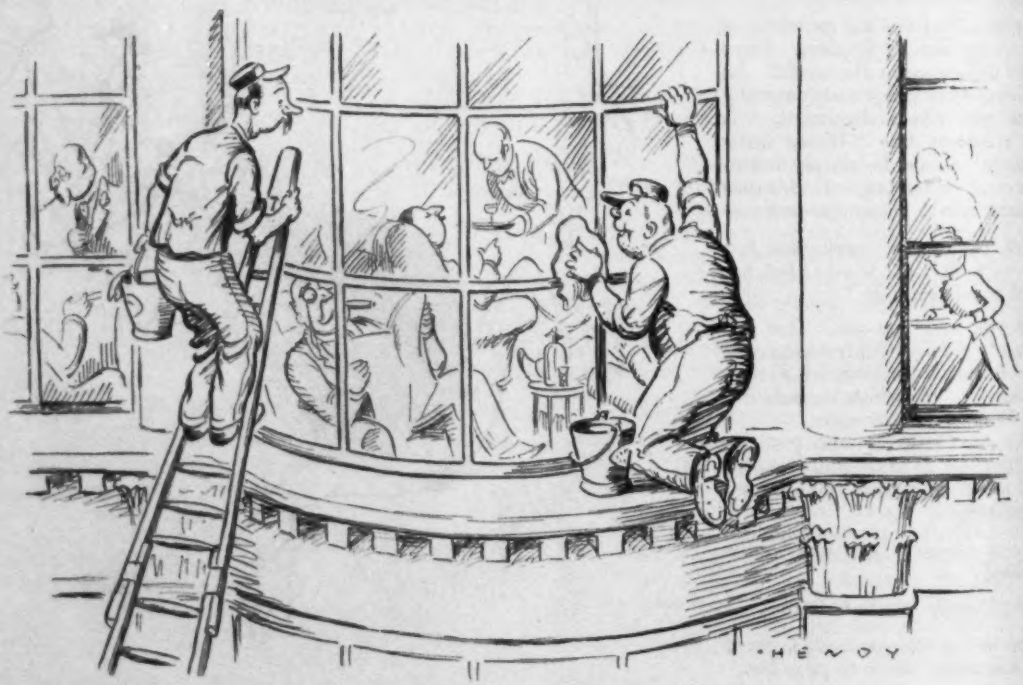
It didn't seem to leave a great deal of the garden—but Laura and I darted out with the eggs—chocolate wrapped in tinfoil, and a dozen little speckled marzipan ones masquerading as the product of the robin, the swallow, the eagle and other springtide denizens of the English countryside.

Aunt followed more slowly with a small cardboard egg covered in scarlet paper, and another one in mauve-and-gold, and she took quite a lot of trouble to hide them in places where they would, she thought, look natural.

(It turned out that, in Aunt's opinion, Nature went straight to a laurel-bush for scarlet eggs, and instinctively selected the base of a sundial for the mauve-and-gold variety.)

"What an extraordinary thing it is," Laura said, "that there doesn't seem to be anywhere to hide anything in a garden, except right down on the ground or very high up in a tree."

She was looking straight at the sky



"WHAT'S THE SUB 'ERE, NOBBY?"

as she spoke—which was of course a hopeless idea.

Aunt pointed out very kindly that to hide eggs right on the ground would be most unjust to the bigger children, and that to put them high up in a tree would place the smaller ones at a thoroughly unfair disadvantage.

"For goodness' sake," Charles suddenly said, "do remember that our children know every single hole and corner in the garden, and none of the others will. It'll be a nice thing if they go and find all the eggs themselves, won't it?"

I quite saw that it would be, and even as I saw, the first car drove up and one had to dash in at the study-window and up the back-stairs to one's room, and then walk down the front-stairs quite slowly to receive them with unstudied delight and surprise in the hall.

Laura reappeared much later and gave me an extraordinarily meaning look, and I decided the meaning to be that she'd hidden all the remaining eggs, and everything was all right, and tea wouldn't be more than five minutes now at the very outside, and my hair was looking nice. So that one felt completely reassured.

The party pursued its usual course. Naturally one didn't expect the children to utter, or the mothers to eat any tea, but so long as the mothers talked and the children ate, hospitality was satisfied. Aunt as a matter of fact did both.

She also said authoritatively that the grass wasn't really very wet, and she thought it was mostly on the surface. (Actually this was weak, because it was on the surface that they were all going to walk, looking for eggs.)

"Nothing is hidden on the flower-beds, or on the tennis-court, or just in front of the house," said Charles—and if I heard one mother repeat that once I heard all of them repeat it five hundred times—and Laura and I said it too, and Aunt, with just that touch of individuality that makes all the difference, said: "Not *that* way, little people, and not *that* way, but *that* way."

But whichever way the little people went they didn't seem to find the eggs very easily—except the scarlet one and the mauve-and-gold one, which they practically all saw at one and the same minute.

Even when one had eliminated one's own children—and I may say that they showed no very co-operative spirit about that—it was difficult to decide who really had found them first. And all the rest of the time was spent in poking about amongst dripping-wet periwinkles, and shaking the rhododendron-bushes and discovering very unattractive forms of insect-life behind large stones—and, very occasionally, an Easter-egg; and even when that was achieved there was still the job of making whichever child it was one was helping look *at* the egg, instead of under it and over it and all round it.

In the end one handed round boxes of sweets, kept in reserve in the drawing-room cupboard, just as the guests were leaving.

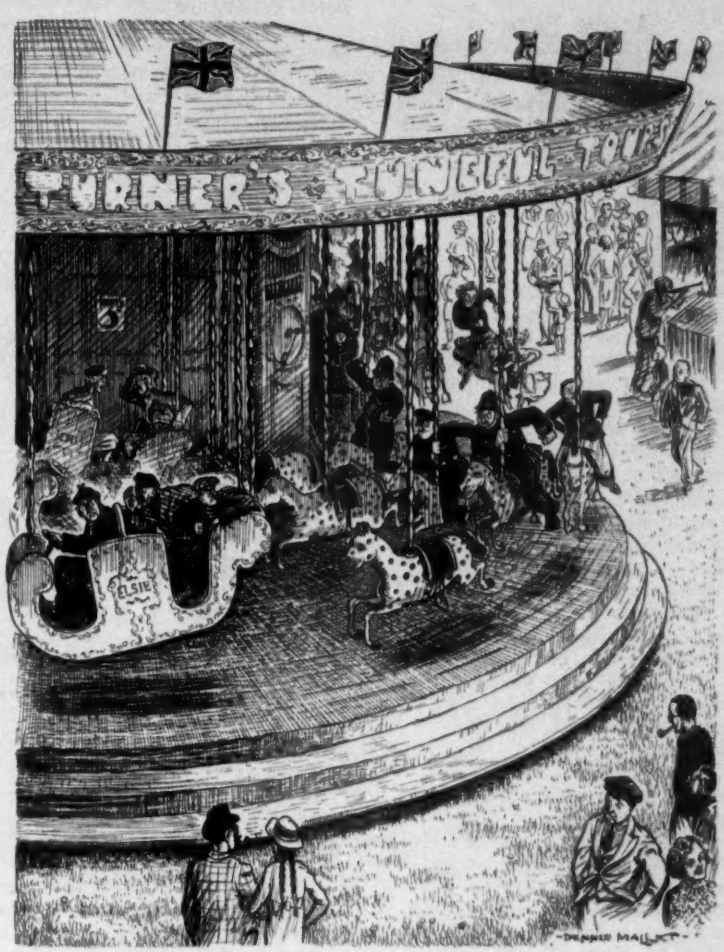
"I'm sure they all enjoyed themselves," said Aunt leniently; "but the eggs ought to have been hidden in much easier places. I said so all along."

"They weren't very good at finding them," Charles observed. "I told you they wouldn't be."

"We tried to hide them in easy places. At least," I said, "I'm sure Laura did."

"Yes," Laura replied, "I did. But, you see, the frightful thing was that I couldn't remember where *any* of the places were. I still can't."

So that this summer, at any moment, pruning roses or picking lavender, one may get quite a surprise. E. M. D.



"'Op on it like 'ell, Shorty—the cops is after us!"

"Young Lady, with Vacuum, efficiently cleans carpets, 2/- hour."
Advt. in Melbourne Paper.

Isn't Nature wonderful?

"Kent Branch: Bromley Division.—Joint meeting with the Beckenham Medical Society at Railway Hotel, Beckenham, Thursday, March 25, 8.45 p.m. Dr. A. C. Hampson: 'Dyspepsia.' Preceded by supper at 7.45 p.m."—*British Medical Journal.*

H'm.

At the Pictures

Film Opera

So that there may be no misunderstanding or false pretences, I feel it my duty at the outset to state in the clearest possible manner that I do not like opera on the screen. No matter how ably the vocal chords are controlled and the emergent notes are presented, I prefer the performers to speak. This being so, it is probably the case that whatever I say about the cinema version of *Pagliacci* will be without value.

None the less, since I happen to have sat through it, I will just say that Richard Tauber, singing as *Canio*, seemed to me to acquit himself with more distinction than Richard Tauber failing to keep the affections of a wife incomprehensibly ready to accept the love of others. There are passages in Leoncavallo's music, known to all, in which the great singer is superb, but the proper place for them is the stage. They demand the other dimensions.

The result might have been better if the film of *Pagliacci* had been produced with more thought. Even in this medium a little persuasiveness is an advantage, and I should have been more impressed had there not been, in the Alps, so much disregard of clothing, and if one of the gayest numbers had not been sung in a charabanc which, in order to remain in the picture, constantly moves backwards as well as forwards, which, elsewhere, charabancs do not do. In film opera no one can, of course, believe; but that is no reason why efforts towards realism should be wholly abandoned. *Canio*, for example, in this version, hires a caravan that is twice too big.

It happens not infrequently that the subsidiary film in the programme is more attractive than the top-liner. I will not go so far as to claim that the humble associate of *Pagliacci* at the Carlton, an example of American ingenuity called *We're On the Jury*, is superior to the operatics, but it is vastly nearer to life; and those who notice its appearance in a programme should certainly see it. The deliberations of a jury, composed of cleverly chosen types, make the theme, and we see how they begin by being eleven to one for conviction, and how, through the persistence of the one and her application of flattery and logic, the minority is turned into a majority and the alleged murderess is acquitted. I could wish that the conclusion did not bring the chief actor and actress under a shower-bath, with the inevitable drenching that even an uninitiated beginner can see coming. There was no need for that; but in spite of this dénouement it is still a good film.



SONG WITH WORDS

Nedda . . . . . Steffi Duna
Canio . . . . . Richard Tauber



DADDY ON THE TILES

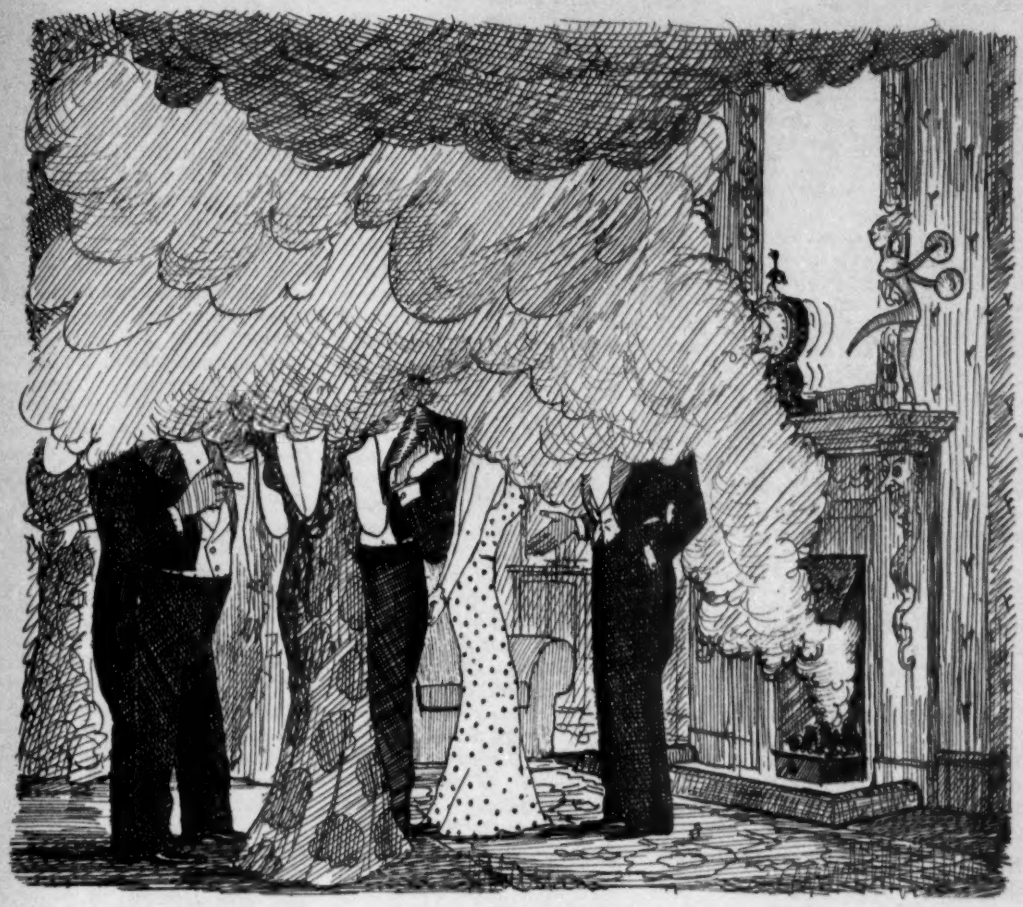
Donna Lyons . . . . Binnie Barnes
Judson Craig . . . . Charles Winninger

It is extraordinary how the news about a film is brought from (so to speak) Ghent to Aix; the public seems to learn in a moment whether it should crowd in or stay away; and that this can have nothing to do with the popularity of the performers is proved by the example of *Three Smart Girls* at the New Gaumont, of which, although there is no one in it who has a name, the praises at once went swiftly round so that the house has been packed ever since. It is not, I think, so good as all that, but it gives the people what they want and it gives it gaily. Everything may be overdone. *Daddy* may be too uxorious, *Precious* may be too much of a gold-digger, *Mother* may be too insipid, the two elder sisters may fall in love too soon, and *Penny* herself may sing too long (as she certainly does); but the end justifies these exaggerations, for is not the separation of the over-credulous *Daddy* from the over-designing *Precious* complete, and is it not all the symmetrical work of a pretty little intriguing schoolgirl? It is this symmetry, fulfilling the sentimental hopes of the audience, which makes the success of the picture; but I hope that film directors, that imitative lot, are not going to give us too much of it.

The acting is particularly adequate, except, I thought, in the mother of *Precious* (whose cigarette-holder is longer even than Edgar Wallace's was), in whom I failed to believe for a moment; while the discovery of Deanna Durbin, who plays *Penny* with youthful charm and skill, is a matter of congratulation to those who were responsible. Long may Deanna Durbin prosper! As *Daddy* I thought Charles Winninger both credible and amusing, but the most memorable moment is when the Hungarian Count, who has been called in to heal *Precious's* disappointment, catches sight of her emerald ring.

The phlegm of our island race is indeed wonderful. Although, among the audiences watching the Grand National on the News Reel everywhere last week, there must have been hundreds who had neither backed "Royal Mail" nor drawn that horse in a sweep, not a soul protested or, in tears, rushed from the theatre. E. V. L.

We learn with deep regret of the death, on March 19th, of Mr. R. J. Richardson, who was for many years a regular and valued contributor to the pages of *Punch*.



THE BRITISH CHARACTER

PARTIALITY FOR OPEN FIRES

Protest

(A writer advocates that the names of England's inns be "modernised." "The names of the inns, like the facilities they offer, are hopelessly out-of-date.")

I WILL not have my inns renamed in this cold-blooded manner;
I'd hate to sign the register inside "The Sump and Spanner";
I'd look with an unkindly eye upon "The Three Choked Jets";
"The Tappets" would inspire me with the blackest of regrets.
Oh, let me have my "Popinjays," my "Peacocks" and my "Ploughs,"
My "Saracens" and "Loggerheads" and "Olde Dun Cows"!

And let men bring no names of inns from over the Atlantic,
For "Hasty-Tasty" and "Pete's Eats" would drive a good man frantic,
And "Bar-B-Q" I could not view without a rising choler,
And "Billy's Place" and "Sloppy Joe's" would fairly make me holler.
I'll drink my pints in "Phœnixes" and "Swans" and "Creaking Wagons,"
In "Boar's Heads" and "Unicorns" and old "Green Dragons."

The roadhouse glitters by the Green; it has no lure for me,
For I sing no encomium of chromium *per se*;
And no "sophisticated" bar will lure me in for tiffin,
For only fools drink gin on stools—good ale is at the "Griffin."
Oh, let me have my "Cheshire Cats," my "Mermaids" and my "Tabards,"
My "Angels" and my "Wheatsheafs" and my "Sword-in-Scabbards"!

Name this Boat

WHAT shall we call her? For, yes, at last that question is creeping into the domain of practical politics. It is a year now, I think, since the keel was laid and she added one to the graver topics of the waterside. They said, even then, the workers who visited the shed, that it was not a keel at all but a foundation-stone, for she would never actually reach the water. So much of her as was ever built, they said, would gradually sink into the ground and in the far future be used by the Council in their Town-Planning scheme for a duck-pond or sunken garden. They wronged her gallant builder, Mr. Bole; they wronged her philosophical owner: we are not such slaves to speed. And, sure enough, only a few weeks ago the lovely monster moved out into the light of the day and grandly settled down upon the wharf. Did I say a "few" weeks? Well, perhaps it was more than that. She has grown a lot in the time. Bit by bit has patiently been added on to her; and every week she has looked a little more like a ship and less like a saucer. Meanwhile she has become a wonder for the passing world and a leading mark for the shipping; and I do not know what the Dutchmen will do the day they steam through Hammersmith Bridge and find that she has gone.

But that day, says Mr. Bole, is coming. Within three weeks, maybe, the old lady will rouse herself—yes, already I think of her as old—and nobly take the water.

But what shall she be called? One rude neighbour who has watched her long repose upon the shore suggested that the obvious name is *Fish out of Water*. I resent that; but there is something in the fish notion. Indeed, it was my own. For with all her strong and graceful curves it is idle to pretend that she will not look a little like a whale. A cross perhaps between a Noah's Ark and a whale. I thought of calling her the *White Whale*; but then, for these muddy waters, she may have to be black. *Fish Royal* is not bad, for that denotes a whale (or sturgeon) and would be apt for Coronation Year. What other fish are there? It is odd how little fish are used for the names of ships. I have found an old *Lloyd's Register of Yachts*—six thousand eight hundred registered yachts: and nearly all of them seem to be named after birds or ridiculous young women. There is a *Cuckoo* and a *Duckling*, six *Sea-Mews*, seven *Sea-Birds*, twelve *Sea-gulls* and thirteen *Curlews*; *White Eagle*, *White Owl*, *Tern*, *Widgeon*, *Wild Duck*, *Swallow*, *Swan*, *Grey Bittern*, *Goose*, *Heron* (six), *Grey Heron*, *Kestrel* (seven), *Cormorant*, *Snipe*, *Mallard*, *Albatross*, *Petrel*, *Pelican* (three), *Penguin* (seven), *Puffin*, *Sandpiper*, *Gannet*, *Kingfisher* (six), *Eaglet*, *Meadow Lark*, *Dodo*, *Bee*, *Wasp* (three), and *King Duck*.

And there are some strange land animals—*Squirrel*, *Lizard*, *Whippet*, *March Hare* and—believe it or not—*Earwig*. Yes, the *Earwig* is, or was in 1932, a motor-yacht of sixteen tons, registered at Southampton, a converted Admiralty pinnace.

But why so many birds of the air—why, especially such landlubber birds as the swallow and owl—and so few denizens of the deep? The yacht, after all, looks down as well as up, and owes much more to the fish than to the fowl.

Well, there are some fishy and amphibious names in the book—some of them surprising. There are, for example, the yachts *Frog*, *Limpet*, *Water Snail*, and *Shrimp*; there is an *Oyster* (but no *Lobster*, *Crayfish* or *Crab*). There are *Seal*, *White Seal*, *Dolphin*, *Terrapin*, and *Turtle*, *Shark*, *Otter*, *Mullet*, *Trout*, *Sea Trout*, *Sea Urchin*, *Sea Fish*, *Pipe Fish*, *Sunfish*, *Seahorse*, *Minnow*, *Mackerel* and *Sprat*.

But no *Whale*, though he is king of the waters. No *Balæna*, no *Leviathan* even. No *Sturgeon* or *Porpoise*. Not even a *Flying Fish*. Is not this odd?

The yachtsman seems to avoid the names of the fishmonger's fish—I do not quite know why; for *Mackerel* and *Mullet* and *Sea Trout* sound well enough: and why no *Salmon*? I can understand the objection to *Cod*, *Kipper*, *Bloater* or *Plaice*; but even they might be redeemed by an epithet. What about the *Flying Cod*, the *Grey Herring*, or *Silver Plaice*? Shall we call our vessel the *White Sole*, the *Dignified Flounder*, the *Stately Turbot*, the *Delicate Halibut*, or *Happy Haddock*? Perhaps not. This is a serious affair and we must have dignity as well as fitness. I see with some dismay that there is a registered yacht called *Hotsy Totsy*.

She will never, I think, move very fast, this vessel, but she will move. She shall move, I swear, at least as far as Southend, though it takes her a week. And therefore, in spite of *Oyster* and *Limpet* (above), I reject *Winkle*, *Mussel* and *Whelk* and other sedentary shell-fish. But surely there are numbers of dignified and charming fish-names still unspoiled by association with the fish-frier? What about the *Golden Carp*, *Silver Bream*, *Lamprey*, *Moonfish*, *Golden Orfe*, *Gudgeon*, *Yellow Perch*, *Flying Gurnard*, *Golden Tench*, *Darting Dace* or *Red-Eyed Rudd*?

And what, I wonder, would somebody give us if we called her the *Black Bass*?

Some of these are good; but they do not suit my ship. She will be splendid,



"SO FAR AS I CAN SEE, MR. POTSON, YOU HAVEN'T ALTERED A SCRAP."

but not as the *Golden Carp*; she will be too solid for *Sunfish* and not so delicate as *Dace*. *Tunnyfish*? *Funny-fish*? *Fun-fish* would not be bad. Or shall we simply giver her an address and call her "*No.* 1 *Hammersmith Roads*"? For she will spend most of her days there, and, though she shall go far and be bold, she will always, I fear, look more like a cottage than a clipper, and be more of a residence than a roamer. I have a good mind to call her *Who Goes Home?* Or the *Floating Flat*. No, no, I have it—*Flatfish*! Now beat that, boys! (No prizes.) A. P. H.

Safe Custody

THE strong room at the bank where I work is cluttered up with black tin boxes which customers leave with us for safety and to make us think they have a lot of valuable papers. And in one tin box the chief clerk keeps a bottle of whisky so that he can pop down and have a quick one when he feels the need. The box is labelled "J. Pumbleberry, Deceased, A. Black and C. White, Exors." The estate was wound up some months ago, and I suppose the chief clerk (his name is Skinner) thought nobody would ever trouble about it any more.

Skinner happened to be out at lunch when the blow fell. A. Black and C. White, exors., two nasty-looking specimens in rimless pince-nez and bowler-hats, crashed in through the door and asked to see the manager, and I conducted them to his hutch.

"My name is A. Black," said one of the pair, "and this is C. White. We are exors. of the late J. Pumbleberry, and though the estate was wound up last July it has come unwound again owing to the discovery of a lot of fresh assets sewed into the lining of the deceased's Sunday suit. We'd like to take our black tin box away with us."

I won't guarantee that those were the exact words, but the meaning was frightfully clear, and my heart bled for poor old Skinner.

Black handed the box-receipt to the manager, who gave one of his false smiles and said he hoped the exors' account would be opened again; and A. Black and C. White said that it would; and they were all as merry as larks except me, who was thinking of poor old Skinner losing his whisky, and probably his reputation as well, unless A. Black and C. White just drank it and allowed it to pass into oblivion.

"Go down to the strong-room and fetch the box marked 'J. Pumbleberry, decd., A. Black and C. White, Exors.,'" said the manager to me, "and wrap it up in brown paper as these gentlemen are going to take it away."



"NO, I NEVER TAKE TAXIS—I BELIEVE IN PUTTING SOMETHING AWAY FOR A RAINY DAY."

I went downstairs and saw that there was a box about the same size at the end of the shelf with no label on it. It didn't look as though it belonged to anybody. "And even if it does," I said to myself, "A. Black and C. White will bring it back when they find we've made a mistake; and meanwhile I can give Skinner the tip to remove his whisky."

So I carefully wrapped up the wrong box and took it up to the manager's room, where A. Black and C. White seized it eagerly and marched out of the bank.

As soon as Skinner came in I went up to him respectfully and said in a hushed sort of tone: "While you were out, Sir, A. Black and C. White (exors. of J. Pumbleberry, deceased) came in and asked for their black box."

Skinner clutched at his desk and went pale.

"That's dreadful," he said. "As a matter of fact I have been using that particular box as a repository for my —er—medicine."

I smiled kindly. "I was aware that you kept your medicine in the box," I said, "so I gave them another box instead. When A. Black and C. White get to their office they will discover that they have the wrong box, and bring it back, but meanwhile you can transfer your medicine elsewhere."

Skinner thanked me warmly.

"That's the first bit of real sense you have shown since you came into the bank," he said. "But which box did you wrap up for A. Black and C. White?"

"A box at the end of the same shelf, without any label on it," I said.

Skinner's smile widened. "That happens to be the box in which the manager keeps *his* medicine," he said.

No Russ in 'Erbie

"Mr. Herbert Morrison, leader of the Labour Party on the Council, disowned the Communist Party."—*The Times*.

For Gardening Gangsters

"Pinch Chrysanthemums to make bushy plants: New cuttings can be taken if a further stock is required."—*Daily Herald*.

From the Ish Anthology

II.

QUESTIONS IN THE AIR

THERE should be some central clearing-house
For the disposal
And possible amendment
Of superstitions.
As things are, who can we ask
Such questions as these:

Suppose a spilt lorry-load of pins;
How many need we pick up?
And
Is a window-cleaner
Particularly lucky,
Because of all the time he spends
On top of ladders?

OBSERVATION

"Almost alone, as a class,
Among women,"
Said the Ish traveller,
"Your Girl Guide officers
Have managed to preserve
The 1915 silhouette."

SIMILES

Her hair resembled
Varnished hemp,
Her hat and fur
Turkish cigarette-ash;

And the little dog she led
Half a tarantula.

FURTHER SIMILE: IMMEDIATELY CONTRADICTORY

Immediately contradictory,
Like an advertisement
Among the "Apartments
And Board Residence"
Beginning:

"Suit Artist.
£200 per annum. . . ."

WORRY

Sometimes, in the milling crowd
At an Underground station,
I wonder uneasily
Whether I have unawares been cast
For an extra's part
In some spectacular crime.

Am I the man
Who is to trip over something
And cause confusion
While the jewels are snatched?
Am I
To be the innocent screen
Between the rest of the public
And the grim gunman
Who menaces the booking-clerk?

NOTHING NEW

The idea of the signature-tune
Is as old
As the distinctively-sung
Yawn.

A GENIUS

"Don't look now, but
That man over there is the discoverer
Of the perfect shape for tinfoil wrapping
An Easter egg."

FILM PHILOSOPHY

Pompous but carefully charming
In his velvet coat,
The old gentleman in the film
Said with a smile of conscious tolerance
To his daughter:

"These moderns,
Who are in such a hurry
To get . . ."
(And here he paused,
Savouring his vast experience,
While the imminence of some Great Thought
Made the air electric)
". . . They know not where. But
You're not listening!"

No, by Gosh,
And that was where I stopped, too.

THE TWO RACES OF MEN

If ignorance is bliss,
And knowledge is power,

What's yours? R. M.

Mr. Tidwhistle Was There.

"PRAY," we said courteously, gazing round a pleasant inn parlour in a charming little village nestling in the heart of the green Chilterns, "have we the honour of addressing Mr. Fred Tidwhistle?"

At these words the ancient seated at a table in the corner raised his head, and even as he did so we knew from the flash in his eye that we had guessed aright and that before us sat no less a person than ex-Corporal Tidwhistle, the man who saved the grog-cart at Chittagong in '78.

"Mr. Tidwhistle," we said earnestly, wiping our fountain-pen nib on our sleeve, "we have come to ask your assistance in an important matter. As you probably know, the B.B.C. are at the moment broadcasting a series of talks by actual participants in famous events of the past. It is our wish, Mr. Tidwhistle, to make you the leading character in a similar episode. We wish to make you the centre of a story that will make all England ring with your name; and it is for this reason, Mr. Tidwhistle, that we have come all the way from London to visit you in this charming village, nestling (as we have been given to understand it does) in the heart of the green Chilterns."

Mr. Tidwhistle wiped his moustache. "So you 'm from the B.B.C., eh? Then I'd like to say a word or two to you, young man. Fred Tidwhistle never was the man to mince——"

"We are not from the B.B.C., Mr. Tidwhistle," we hastened to assure him. "Far from it; we represent the Medbury Broadcasting Corp., and it is our aim, Mr. Tidwhistle, to set up stations which will vie with official stations and, by perpetually broadcasting programmes of dance-music and variety, with occasional items such as you provide, to drive them out of the land by taking away what few patrons they have left. In a word, Mr. Tidwhistle, we are radio pirates."

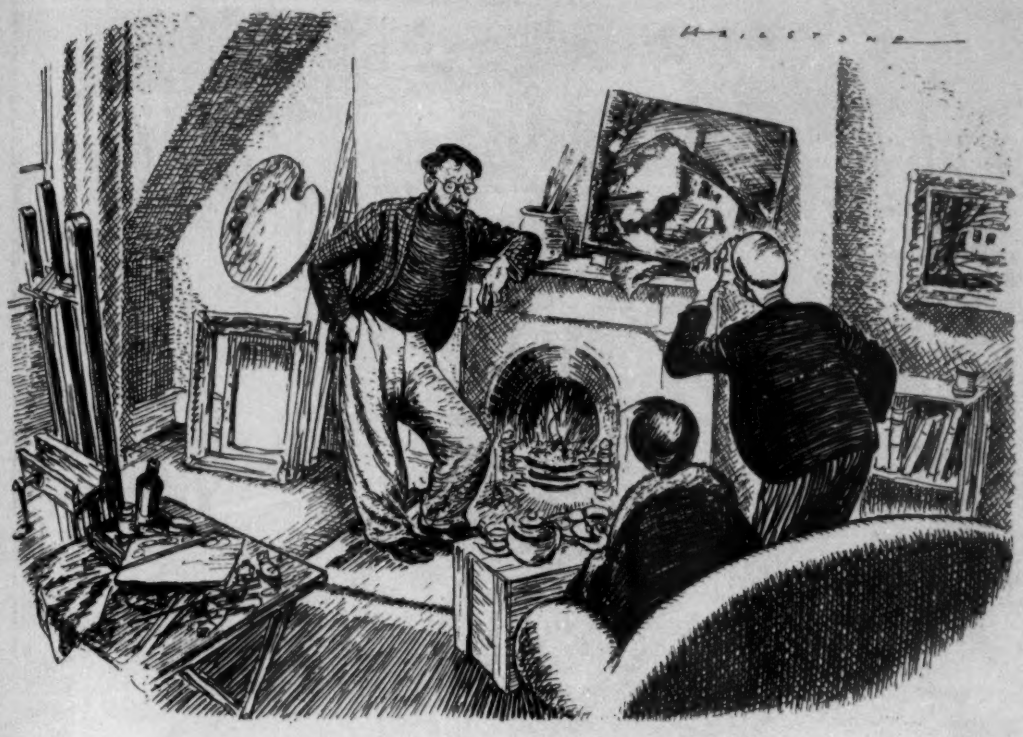
"Pirates?" asked this grand old warrior, who appeared to have been sleeping during our impassioned discourse. "Ay, many 's the tale I can tell o' pirates. Off Porto Rico, it were, and as fine a day as ever you did see. 'Ship ho!' sings out the look-out man, and up we all tumbles——"

"No, no, Mr. Tidwhistle," we explained. "We don't want to hear about pirates—not yet, anyway. We want to hear once again the description of your saving of the grog-cart at Chittagong, as told last week to our friend Mr. Medbury during a visit which he paid to this charming village of yours, nestling (as he pointed out) in the heart of the green Chilterns. Moreover, Mr. Tidwhistle, we are prepared to pay a sum of no less than ten shillings for the sole rights of the story. And you shall," we added, giving a sign to mine host, "have beer unlimited."

"Done!" said the old war-horse, and waiting only for the arrival of a tray of foaming tankards, he plunged into his narrative.

"Seven days out from Singapore we were, and it was on the evening of the seventh day that they attacked. There was only four white men: a lootenant, meself and two privates; all the rest was Sikhs, and all o' 'em mortal sick o' the fever. 'Tidwhistle, me man,' says the lootenant, 'you stay 'ere with ten men and guard the cart. I'm a-going off for to reckernoiter. Keep your eyes skinned, and whatever 'appens, don't lose the grog-cart. There's men in Lucknow as 'll be mortal relieved when we gets there with that.'"

"*Lucknow*, Mr. Tidwhistle?" we asked in surprise.



"AS A MATTER OF FACT THE WARM SUNLIGHT WAS QUITE AN ACCIDENT. I HAPPENED TO SPILL SOME CUSTARD ON IT."

"Mebbe it wasn't Lucknow, then. Mebbe it was Cawnpore," he conceded. "And with that he marches straight off into the bush and leaves us alone with the cart. I wastes no time, and in a brace o' shakes we 'as the laager made, and there's all of us lying snug as a bug in a rug behind the camels." He drained his third pint and caressed the fourth lovingly. "But 'ark!" he continued dramatically, suppressing a hiccup and cupping his horny hand to an ear the size of a dinner-plate. "What is it I 'ears? A rustle in the bush! 'Alt! 'Old 'ard!' I cries. ''Oo goes there? Stand or I fire! Advance three paces and be reckernised!' "

"Rather muddling surely, Mr. Tidwhistle?" we suggested.

"It's regulations," he said. "Foller the book and you can't go far wrong. Suddenly the yam-yams parts and a dark shadder steps into the glade. 'A henemy!' I cries, and with that I lets 'im 'ave both barrels o' my Worthington."

"Worthington?" we repeated, rather startled.

"Thankee, I will," he said quickly, nodding to the barman. "I meant Winchester, though. Both barrels I gives 'im—bang, bang, right and left. Or mebbe it was bang, bang, top and bottom. I never could get the 'ang o' they new-fangled guns. Down 'e goes in a neap all covered with gore. The next minute the 'ole forest was in an uproar, and a 'orde of Zulus rushes into the clearing."

"Zulus, Mr. Tidwhistle?"

"Well, and why not?" he demanded truculently.

"Oh, nothing really, Mr. Tidwhistle; only we understood that Chittagong was in Burma."

"And 'oo said it wasn't? Am I telling this tale, or you? Right, then. There they was, Zulus, thousands o' them, a-beatin' o' their tum-tums and shaking their shpearsh."

"Shpearsh, Mr. Tidwhistle?"

"Ah, shpearsh," he reaffirmed with a bold sweeping gesture. "Shpearsh and shordsh. Hundred and thousandsh o' 'em. 'Fire!' I cried—'Fire, or them devils will be the death of ush all. And what chansh for Cawnpore?' " He stopped to drain his eighth tankard.

"Faster, Mr. Tidwhistle!" we cried in his ear, shaking him by the shoulder, for the old drun—the old war-dog seemed to have fallen into a coma.

He sat up with a start. " 'Muffle the oarsh!' I cries," he said in a loud voice, making another sweeping gesture with his arm, "'and above all keep your powder dry!' "

"Oars, Mr. Tidwhistle?" we asked, mopping the beer off our trousers. "We never heard anything about oars before."

"O' course you didn't. That'sh why we 'ad 'em muffled, so as no one would know about it."

"And what happened then?" we prompted. "There you were, surrounded on all sides by hundreds and hundreds of Zulus——"

"Thash righ'. Hunderdsh and hunderdsh and hunderdsh and hunderdsh . . . and hunderdsh . . . and hunderdsh . . ."

At this point unfortunately the gallant soldier fell into a deep slumber from which it proved impossible (up to the time of going to press) to wake him. We are awaiting a telegram from the landlord (who has a keen eye to business), and as soon as we get it we shall hasten down to that charming village, nestling (as we expect you know) in the heart of the green Chilterns, to get the rest of this extraordinary story.

And then, you mark my words, we shall make the B.B.C. look pretty silly.



House Huntress. "IF YOU'RE GOING TO TUMBLE EVERY TIME YOU COME DOWN THE STEPS, WE TAKE THE BUNGALOW."

Ugh!

THE world is full of horrible people,
Their eyes are fat, their noses coarse;
I'd like to take them up, one by one, to a very tall steeple
And drop them into gorse.

There's Mrs. Blount:
She wears *pince-nez* and retails the sins of her neighbours;
Her mouthings suggest a camel with the croup;
Her tongue is well-nigh muscle-bound with its Herculean labours;
She whistles into soup.

And Mr. Hopson:
Mr. Hopson is always ineffably cheerful, but a Tartar;
He is quite the healthiest-looking person I have ever seen;
Yet the awful diseases to which he will tell you, merrily and in full detail, he is a martyr
Total 117.

Then Sydney Vale:
Vale Senior made all his money from an extremely patent corset;
Sydney loathes the fact, is natty, has dark curls;
And whatever conversation he happens to butt into (a habit of his), he will force it
To the subject of Girls.

And Pam:
She and many other people think her immensely pretty;
But her eyes are hard and her lips are far too thick;
She collects a mess of youths about her who pretend that her brainless chatter is marvellous, and when one of them cracks up over her she says, "What a pity!"
She makes me sick.

All the faces I meet are malicious and distorted;
The streets are crawling with loathsome human Things;
Yet you'd expect them to wear, from their self-satisfied expressions (assorted),
Wings.

I cannot enumerate all these impossible people,
With ears that flap and voices greasy or hoarse;
But I *would* like to take them up, one by one, to the top of an exceedingly tall steeple
And
drop
them
into
GORSE.



EPISCOPAL AID

BISHOPS OF DURHAM AND BIRMINGHAM. "NOW COME ALONG AND BE A LITTLE RAY OF SUNSHINE IN THERE."

Impressions of Parliament

Thursday, March 18th.—Scientists are very clever fellows who daily make life faster and noisier, but if there is one certain way of making them hang their heads in shame it is to refer quietly but firmly to the common cold, the laughter of whose bacilli rings out from every laboratory in the world. This laughter, however, may soon be stilled, according to a statement by Mr. RAMSAY MACDONALD this afternoon, for a close relative, the virus of influenza, has been successfully rounded up, and the Medical Research Council hope that this capture will lead to the apprehension of the other members of the family. Scientists have their own ways of persuading germs to turn King's evidence.

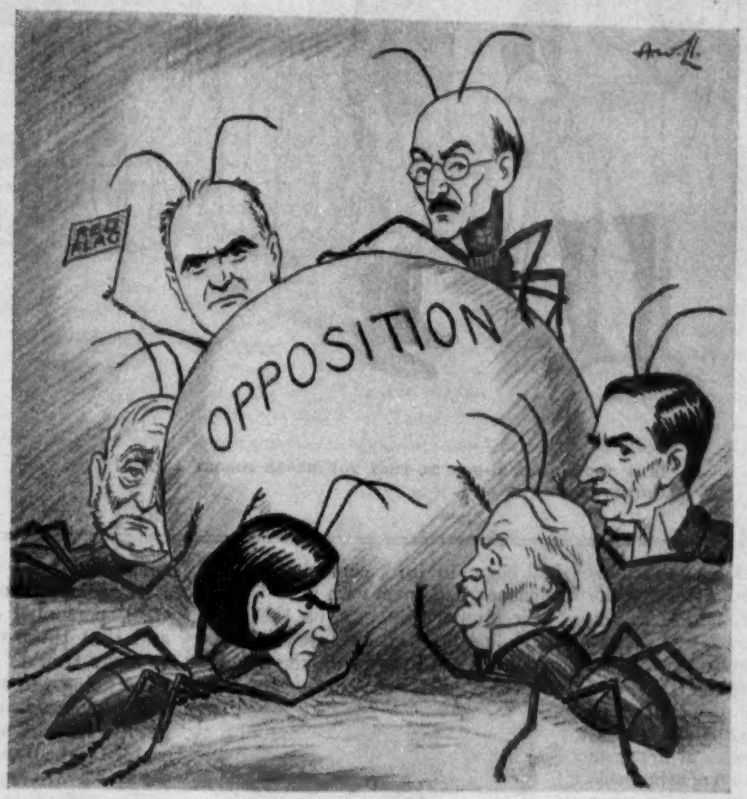
When the Naval Estimates were considered on Report, the Labour Party took the opportunity afforded by the Vote for Personnel to move a reduction of men by 1,000, declaring that the numbers asked for could not yet be needed, since it would be some years before the new ships could be brought into commission. A further criticism was that promotion from the lower deck was not sufficiently encouraged, and that Dartmouth was a class institution.

Sir ROGER KEYES reminded the Opposition that the present shortage of personnel was the cause of longer foreign service for many ranks; and in his reply Sir SAMUEL HOARE insisted that both he and the Government were anxious to see a wider ladder of promotion, and told the House he was trying to find ways of making it easier for young men in the Service to prepare for the very difficult examinations which they had to pass.

It was the intention of the Government, he said, to adhere to the outsize limits of fourteen inches for guns and thirty-five thousand tons for battleships.

Friday, March 19th.—This afternoon's debate concerned the Money Resolution for the Special Areas, and the Labour Party filled in a little their claim that the Government was meeting a great problem with only a puny effort.

In Mr. JOHN'S view a drainage-scheme should have been introduced which would have brought a large amount of land back into cultivation, and he accused the Government of transferring the young people while waiting for the old to die. When the White Paper gave the figure of two thousand men settled annually on the land, it had to be remembered, he said, that over a thousand men were leaving the land each year; and he claimed that, as all except one of the new industries proposed for the depressed areas were connected with defence, the end of the programme would result in worse conditions than ever.



ALL AT CROSS PURPOSES

From Left to Right—
MR. LANSBURY, MR. GALLACHER, MR. MAXTON, MR. ATTLEE, MR. LLOYD GEORGE AND SIR ARCHIBALD SINCLAIR.

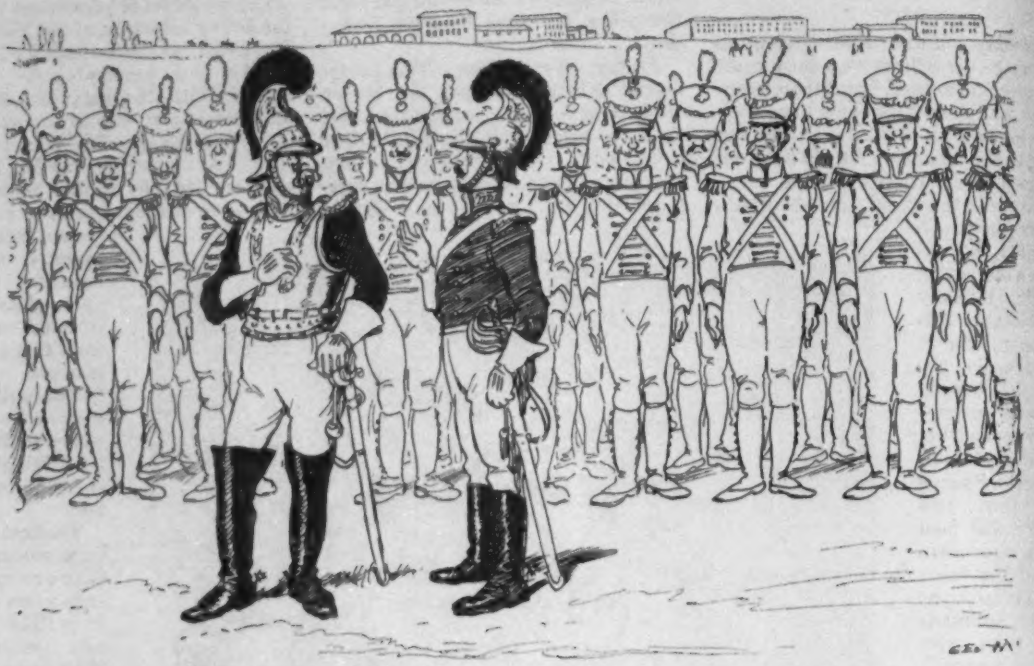
Mr. DUNN suggested the construction of a canal from Goole to Sheffield which would be of permanent value to the heavy industries of the North; Mr. DAVID ADAMS saw no hope for Durham in the new proposals; Mr. BATEY agreed, with the CHANCELLOR, that land settlement was no solution, but asked why no steps had been taken to revive old industries; and Mr. LESLIE, who treated the House to a short lecture on the wider uses of coal, announced that he had recently seen a beautiful pair of opera-glasses constructed entirely from this unlikely material. (An extraordinarily neat way, when one comes to think of it, of bringing the stage nearer the pit.)

The best speech from amongst the Government's supporters came from Miss WARD, who praised the MINISTER OF LABOUR for his successes but urged more co-operation between Sir THOMAS INSKIP, Mr. RUNCIMAN and Mr. BROWN, so that what she called the "industrial gaps" of this country could be filled in the special areas.

In his reply Mr. BROWN explained that drainage was the province of the MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, and declared that the Government was trying in the Resolution to carry out the recommendations of the Commissioner. The most potent inducement to new industries was reduced rent.

Afterwards, in the inimitable way of Parliament, those Members who were left turned to the contemplation of umbrella-handles, it being the wish of Dr. BURGIN to impose a duty on these of half-a-crown a dozen. But as Mr. ALEXANDER objected that the House lacked adequate time in which to take such a decision, the debate was adjourned.

Monday, March 22nd.—The Air Estimates were considered on Report,



"Is it true, your Highness, that you never forget a face?"
"Unfortunately it is."

and the Labour Party moved to reduce the Vote by 1,000 men. Attacking the present system of promotion in the R.A.F., Mr. Garro-Jones told the old story about the murmur overheard on parade of "Here comes the C.O.—and her husband!" and declared that petticoat and other malign influences were clogging the careers of first-rate officers. On the question of armament profits, he criticised the Government severely for giving the responsibility for checking costs to the Hardman Committee, which had done the same job at the Ministry of Munitions in the last War at such a cost to the taxpayer.

The most interesting feature of the debate was the complete difference of opinion which it showed between two Admirals over the Fleet Air Arm. Sir Roger Keyes, holding that Naval aviation must be independent to develop properly, accused Lord Weir of being the "evil genius" of the Balfour Committee (which had advised against a separate arm) under the inspiration of Lord Trenchard. It seemed, he said, that Lord Weir was still persuading the Government against an impartial inquiry; and he described how, when dual control of the Fleet Air Arm had begun in 1918, confusion and inefficiency had come with it.

Sir Murray Sueter, on the other hand, hoped that the House would not allow the R.A.F. to be broken up. He assured Members that during the War there had been friction between the R.N.A.S. and the R.F.C. over engines, steel, personnel and everything else, and that those who were still trying to make trouble between the Services were doing the country a great harm. The Services, he said, should work together instead of in the silly little water-tight compartments on which so many Naval men insisted.

The two other speeches of the day came from Mr. Churchill, who declared that the Fleet should have complete control over its own air service, and produced figures to show that the Air Ministry was about 56 per cent. behind the promised rate of air expansion; and from Sir Thomas Inskip, who seemed confident of arriving at a sound decision about the Fleet Air Arm with the help of the Chiefs of Staffs. It was perfectly true, he said, that Lord Weir had been consulted in the matter, but there was nothing unnatural in that. As for the allegations of profiteering, the rise in the prices of raw materials was far more due to a world shortage than to the Government's programme; and he sought to comfort the House with more cheerful figures than those of Mr. Churchill.



OUR BACK-BENCH *WHO'S WHO*

Sitting for Stoke-on-Trent
Is not Mr. McLaren's only bent;
For long ago he gave his heart
To Art.

A Hope for Literature

It is now the custom of novelists to spend at least one day a week reviewing other people's novels. The result of this has been a substantial rise in masterpieces.

Mr. Mangel, you see, is afraid that if he condemns Mr. Wurzel's latest book—

(1) Readers will think he is jealous of Mr. Wurzel (which is true);

(2) Wurzel-lovers will consider that Mr. Mangel is stupid and will refuse to buy Mr. Mangel's novels;

(3) Mr. Wurzel himself will resent it and

(4) Will cut Mr. Mangel at the next sherry-party, or, worse still,

(5) Review Mr. Mangel's next book adversely.

So, if he considers possibility (1), he describes Mr. Wurzel's novel as "even better than anything I could have written;" (2) "All Mr. Wurzel's numerous admirers will be charmed by his latest work;" or (3), (4), (5), from any of the following:—

"A truly great book."
"Mr. Wurzel's brilliant best."
"A human, vital, *readable* book."
"Sheer perfection."
"A little masterpiece of { witty nonsense." / biting satire." / tragic beauty."

Or he may delight the reviewreaders with personal details of his own life:—

"I couldn't go to sleep until I had finished it," or, "I was just about to shave one morning when I happened to pick up this novel, and I allowed my beard to grow till evening."

One might imagine that all this would be conducive to good relations in the Book World. Not at all. Only hardened and leisured readers are able to keep up with the supply of masterpieces recommended by Mr. Mangel; Mr. Mangel, at heart, dislikes Mr. Wurzel's prose style (if any); and Mr. Wurzel suspects his motives in praising the book. And when Mr. Wurzel comes to review Mr. Mangel's next novel he will feel bound, very regretfully and for the same reasons as Mr. Mangel, to praise it.

So the atmosphere of literary circles nowadays is one of charming and courteous dislike—only to be compared with that of Bath in Regency Days.

The only solution, so far as I can see, *is for each novelist to review his own books.*

For surely novelists will never be conceited enough to praise their own works excessively, and we may expect reviews of a more modest character:—

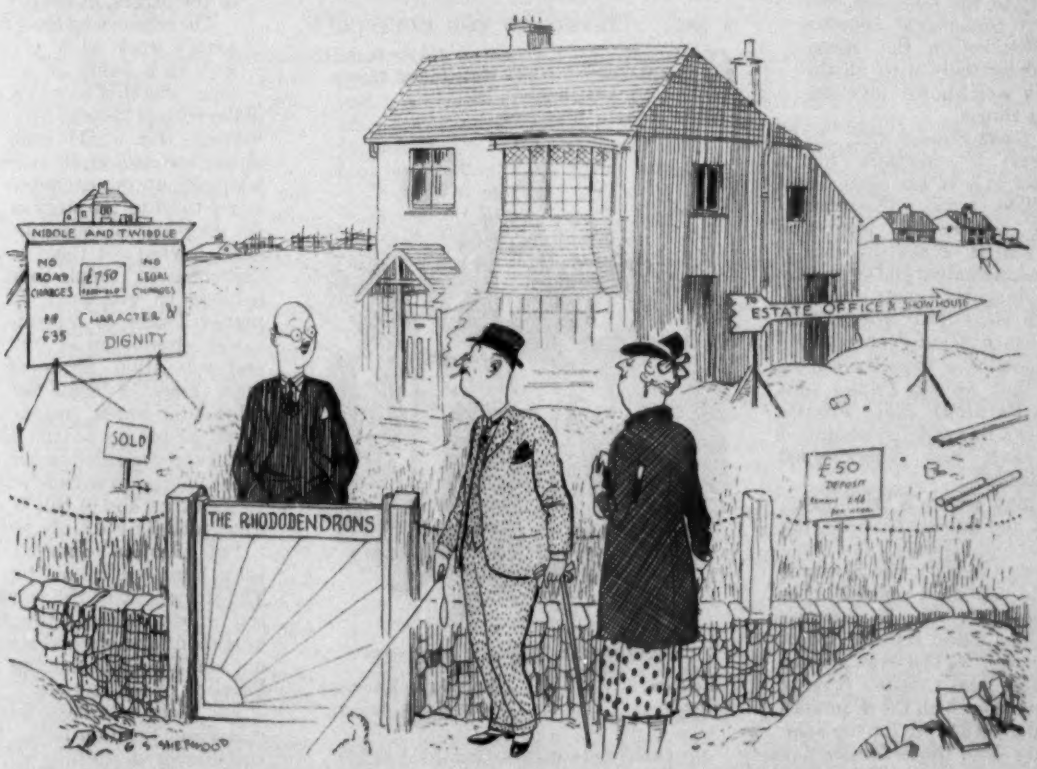
"Quite a good little book. Not one of my best, perhaps, but well worth borrowing."

"Those who picked up earlier books of mine at reduced prices should look out for this one on the remainder shelves. It's really no worse than the others."

Or for those readers who like to feel on intimate terms with the novelist:—

"Considering that my wife was ill when I wrote this and I had to nurse the baby with the other hand, I don't think it's too bad."

Which reminds me—I have just written a novel myself. Though I hardly care to say so, it really is a brilliant little book. In fact I think one might almost call it a masterpiece of tragic beauty.



"Why 'The Rhododendrons'?"
"Well, they said the name was included in the price, and that was the longest one I knew."

At the Play

"GEORGE AND MARGARET"
(WYNDHAM'S)

THERE is a saying that the Englishman is always wishing that people would go away. If so, *George and Margaret*, at Wyndham's Theatre, take the right steps for popularity, for they never appear at all. They are not even voices off, but they exercise a good deal of influence on the *Garth-Bander* family living at Hampstead.

Unlike *George and Margaret*, the *Garth-Banders* are very much in evidence, and the great success of a light-hearted evening comes from the intimate domesticities of their household. From the recurrent sausages at breakfast and the chronically cold bath-water to *Mrs. Garth-Bander's* desire to be considered an understanding mother from whom the family have no secrets, the play is a series of reminders, real home-truths, and the majority of the audience, seeing very reminiscent episodes and attitudes on the stage, laugh delightedly with all the Briton's well-known love for familiar things.

Mr. Garth-Bander (Mr. NOËL HOWLETT) is something like a character in a rather sentimental best-selling novel, the absent-minded apparently ineffective father who is all the time full of deep understanding and sympathy and his daughters' great stand-by. His wife, *Alice* (Miss JOYCE BARBOUR), has the lioness's share of the talking, and it is from her, apparently, that young *Dudley* (Mr. NIGEL PATRICK) and *Frankie* (Miss JANE BAXTER) have acquired their easy and unrestrained vocabularies.

The play covers a brief period of time, and nobody changes very much except *Gladys*, the maid (Miss ANN CASSON), who blossoms out into affianced splendour in the Third Act. She is marrying *Claude*, the eldest son (Mr. JOHN BOXER), and we feel even greater misgivings than *Claude's* parents at a marriage which the dramatist has contrived simply for the sake of giving *Mrs. Garth-Bander* a nasty jolt. It is unexpected, for *Claude* is not merely a scout-master but an ambitious and rising architect. His marriage is the chief instance of a recurrent characteristic of the play which collects its laughs indiscriminately and at random, as though the dramatist were more anxious to cram his three Acts with satirical sidelights on life at close quarters in a suburb than to develop the interplay of characters in a closely-knit situation.



A SAFE ADDITION TO THE HOUSEHOLD

Alice . . . . . MISS JOYCE BARBOUR
The New Maid . . . . . MISS IRENE HANDL



"POPPET'S" BEDTIME STORY

Malcolm . . . . . MR. NOËL HOWLETT
Frankie . . . . . MISS JANE BAXTER

Mr. GERALD SAVORY is on such an easy wicket with the foibles of the everyday round that it is not surprising if he has given the benefit of the doubt to much that a more vigorous dramatist would have cut out.

Frankie is the centre of emotional interest, with a love-affair which it is not easy to take very seriously, for she is a young lady who bestows her affections easily and *Roger* is a commonplace young man, very likely to bore her.

The audience, while sympathetic with the young lovers, kept its real enthusiasm for the appearance of the *New Maid* (Miss IRENE HANDL), who is the making of the Third Act, with her strange and husky manners and an appearance guaranteed to prevent a second *mésalliance* in the *Garth-Bander* family. D. W.

"THE SQUEAKER" (STRAND)

This revival is being advertised as "EDGAR WALLACE'S best play." On what grounds, I wonder? To me it falls short of *The Ringer*, to say nothing of the others, at every point.

The reason why most of WALLACE'S work as a playwright had such value as entertainment was that he was a master of the trick of keeping his audience moving. He would bring them slowly forward in their seats by whipping up the excitement with a new twist to the story or a sudden emphasis on the suspense, and then, having got them taut and apprehensive, topple them back, helpless to withstand an unexpected *douche* of humour. This severe alternation of contraction and relaxation produced to a most agreeable degree the forgetfulness for which, unconsciously, most people go to the theatre; its success depended on the timing of the change-over from one mood to the other, and of this WALLACE was generally a deadly judge.

But here he seems to me to have been out of his top form. The story is thin, the excitement too widely spaced, the tension uncertain; and the last scenes are not so much a climax as an untidy knotting of the strands.

For those who have forgotten, it is about the hunt for a "fence" who is disposing successfully of the proceeds of a number of notable robberies. This is being led by a police inspector of legendary efficiency whom scarcely

anyone knows, and the chief connecting-link between the different episodes is a crime-reporter attached to the case, who is possessed of an uncanny knack of being on the spot when things happen.

Early in the play it is quite easy to hit on the identity of the wanted man, and this only leaves the insufficient interest of deciding which is the elusive Inspector—though admittedly there is a most ingenious dodge for throwing one off the track.

The play is stronger in comedy, however, than in thrills, and two characters, *Collie*, the reporter, and *Bill*, the proprietor of the shady night-club, are amongst Mr. WALLACE's richest creations. Looking more and more like an eccentric twin-brother to Sir JOHN REITH, Mr. ALASTAIR SIM represents Fleet Street with all his dry delightful humour of voice and expression; and *Bill*, ribald philosopher on the grand Cockney scale, is in the safe hands (as I believe he was originally) of Mr. HENRY WENMAN.

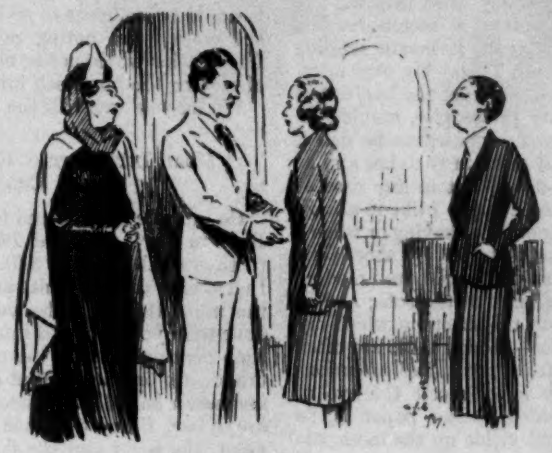
Of the rest, Mr. HARTLEY POWER's acting is the most distinguished. He is excellent in the part of *Captain Leslie*, and he produced the play. ERIC.

"WISE TO-MORROW" (LYRIC)

The emotional domination of a girl by a woman twice her age is material which could easily be made into a play unpleasant, but Mr. STEPHEN POWYS has introduced this theme in so sane a company and wrapped it up in such a generous sandwich of comedy that it serves its dramatic end without affecting the atmosphere of the rest of the piece. The problem put forward is a real one and not lightly treated, but it is used objectively for purposes of story-telling rather than for gloomy delving into the psychology of the abnormal. And on this showing Mr. POWYS can tell a story uncommonly well.

He takes the case of a middle-aged actress whom a weak heart has forced to retire at the peak of great success and who, growing fond of a young player, determines to compensate herself for the tragedy of her broken career by imposing her own personality on the girl's immature technique and thus once more to enjoy theatrical triumph, although vicariously. This is *Diana* (Miss MARTITA HUNT). She has tempestuous courage, but she is vain, selfish and entirely without scruple.

The attentions of so famous a lady are too flattering to be withstood by a character as weak and shallow as that of *Joan* (Miss DIANA CHURCHILL), who



TWO OFFERS OF MANAGEMENT; OR, A LEADING LADY'S DILEMMA

Diana Ebury . . . . . MISS MARTITA HUNT
Peter Marsh . . . . . MR. ESMOND KNIGHT
Joan Campion . . . . . MISS DIANA CHURCHILL
Colley . . . . . MISS OLGA LINDO

is partially hypnotised into the bargain; but she is about to be married and has promised *Peter* (Mr. ESMOND KNIGHT), whom she imagines she loves, to give up the stage. She persuades him to let her take, at a Sunday



THE CREAM IN HIS COFFEE

Tony Campion . . MISS NORA SWINBURNE
Norman Weldon . MR. NAUNTON WAYNE

dramatic club, the part selected for her by her patroness, and when the excellence of her performance brings managers contending eagerly with offers of West-End production, the play's main situation has developed.

Diana, jealous and implacable, cries "Wolf!" about her weak heart and does everything in her power to estrange *Joan* from *Peter*; *Peter*, a decent ordinary young man, puts up a resistance too gentlemanly to be effective in *guerilla* conditions; and *Joan* is torn hysterically between the two of them. The choice lies with her. How the conflict is resolved is for Mr. POWYS to tell; his verdict is just, and, like a prudent bookmaker with his liabilities, he lays off the sympathies elsewhere, so that *Joan's* problem does not monopolise the interest.

In this he is greatly assisted by the presence for much, but never too much, of the time of Mr. NAUNTON WAYNE, famous as compère but new, at least to me, in a straight play. The experiment, if it is such, is immensely successful. In the part of an artist from the next flat he pays court throughout the play to *Tony* (Miss NORA SWINBURNE), *Joan's* sister, a girl of charm and character, who is in love with *Peter* but too unselfish to admit it; and he delivers faultlessly lines whose well-turned wit matches the casual impudence of his manner. The best of a number of funny scenes between these two is the most economically-worded proposal I can recall on the stage; but they are not always wise-cracking, and when just a little sentimental are equally good.

Miss HUNT's is a forceful and tactful portrait in which sympathy is not altogether killed by repulsion; *Diana* is a monster, but she can excite pity. Miss CHURCHILL reveals *Joan's* state of mind with skill and gives a clever study of the silly twinkling of a little star; Mr. KNIGHT plays capably the somewhat uninteresting part of *Peter*.

The background is filled out with humour and distinction by Miss OLGA LINDO as *Diana's* dinner-jacketed secretary, by Mr. ARCHIBALD BATTY as the hearty who had unaccountably led *Diana* to the altar, and by Miss BEATRIX FEILDEN-KAYE, whose *Maid* earns a place at the High Table of that thronged and jealous assembly, the Theatrical Servants' Hall. ERIC.

"The Guild of Learners held its autumn meeting in Taunton. In the morning talks on Quilting and on Knitting were given by Miss Armes and by Mrs. Legge."—*Local Paper*.
Those indispensable Members.

Interval for Buns

READING the newspapers intelligently is a phrase one hears, but it doesn't always mean the same thing. To some it means disbelieving practically every word they say; to others, notably newspaper-proprietors, it means reading one particular paper; to others again it means reading them over people's shoulders in the Tube. My own interpretation is different from all these. To get the best out of the newspapers, according to my philosophy, one should read them while doing, or at least supposed to be doing, something else. One should read them in snatches and at odd moments, probably upside-down, but in any case at the page at which they happen to be open. I like to absorb a column or so when I am telephoning or shaving or when I stick my foot up on the hall-table to tie my shoe-laces. I am fond of lying on my stomach on the floor and reading the piece that has fallen off the back of the sofa; and of course, like everyone else, I study the sheets in which my shoes come back from the cobbler—though these are often old. In this way one assimilates a great deal of curious and exciting information which never meets the eye of the serious after-breakfast student. The paper is, so to speak, taken off its guard and yields up the most surprising secrets.

For instance, I found this while I was attempting to draw up the fire with pages 7, 8–17, 18 of *The Daily Telegraph* of March 22nd:—

> *"This week's Homecraft Competition prize of one guinea will be paid for the most interesting hot cross bun recipe received by Tuesday night."*

I decided to enter for this competition at once because the importance of earning money in your spare time is widely recognised by all the best Correspondence Colleges, and only a fool despises a guinea. Besides, any one with a kitchen and a little imagination can invent a recipe.

My only difficulty was to decide exactly what was meant by "the most interesting hot cross bun recipe." Did it mean the most interesting recipe for a hot cross bun? Or did it mean a recipe for the most interesting hot cross bun? There is an obvious difference. An interesting *recipe* I take to be a recipe which is interesting to read or to carry out—preferably both; an interesting hot cross bun must be a hot cross bun which is interesting to look at and/or to eat. In one case one is concerned ("interested," as cooks say) with the process of manufacture, in the other with the product. The distinction is so clear that it is to me astonishing that the organisers of this competition should have failed to notice the ambiguity.

I came to the conclusion that the best thing to do was to send in two entries with a letter of explanation, leaving it to them to decide what precisely was intended by the terms of the competition. For the recipe part I knew that it would be sufficient to go into the kitchen and make some hot cross buns, noting my procedure as I went along. Imagination would not be needed until it came to a question of making the bun itself interesting.

We may as well call the result of Part I., Entry A.

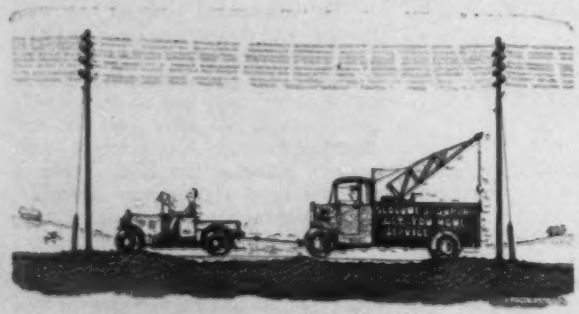
MOST INTERESTING RECIPE FOR MAKING HOT CROSS BUNS

Go into the kitchen and look up the recipe for Hot Cross Buns in *Three Hundred Things a Bright Cook Can Make* (with washable cover, 3/6). Delete "Mixed Spice" from Ingredients (too difficult) and add 1 bot. old sherry. Put the milk, the eggs, the yeast, half the sugar and more flour than you expected into a pan. Stir well, at the same time pouring some of the old sherry into a separate container. Go on stirring (but stop pouring) until the mixture assumes a hangdog consistency, then place in front of the fire to rise. Stand well back. Scrape the milk, the eggs, the yeast, the sugar and the flour off the hob and put into a larger pan to sink. Toss off the old sherry and tell the cook to go back to her bedroom and rest. Remember the butter. Rub the butter in some flour and drop it into the pan. Beat the buttered mixture into a batter. Take time off, or (better) toss off more sherry. Now batter into a lather, *i.e.*, until one or the other of you begins to foam at the mouth. Try to divide into buns. Try again. Give up trying and put all together into a large cake-tin, adding old sherry to ensure a good head. Leave kitchen.

This, strictly speaking, is the end of the recipe, the cooking being mere routine work and not at all interesting. But to avoid waste I slipped the tin into a hot oven before retiring to my study to plan Part II.

The most interesting hot cross bun was what I had to envisage now. One speaks of a good bun or a light bun or a digestible bun, but what is an *interesting* bun? Presumably one which has about it some quality of the unusual, a striking bun, a bun that excites remark. It might be by reason of its size, or its shape, or possibly through the addition of some quite extraneous ornamentation, but it must clearly *look* intriguing. It must be the observed of all observers. And furthermore it must not let itself down in the eating. There must be a *je ne sais quoi* about its taste. Supposing one made it star-shaped, now, with angelica trimmings and laced with rum? That would be out of the common. Or it could be fried in butter instead of baked, and eaten on cherry-sticks. I went back to the kitchen determined to produce far and away the most unusual hot cross bun the world had ever seen.

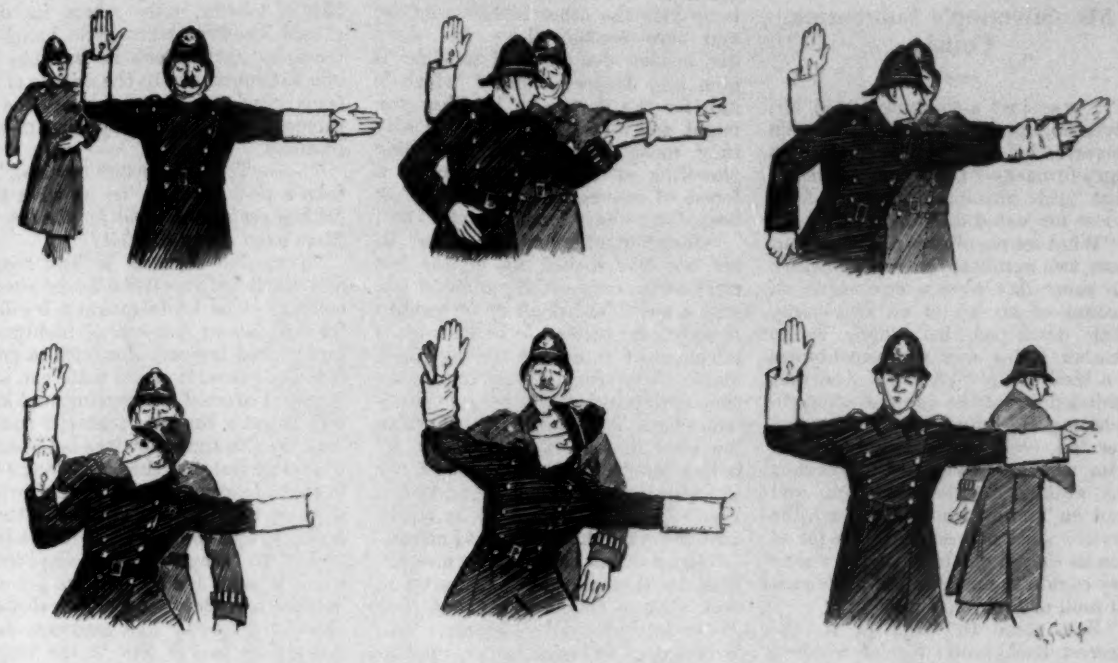
It was only when I opened the oven-door that I realised I had already done so. H. F. E.



HUMILIATION

"Having explained to the children the manners and customs of the hunting field, hounds moved away to Badger Hills, and finding immediately came away over Cuxwold Hall Farm, but just short of Coxwold Park a fresh fox jumped up, and hounds divided, some of them reaching Croxby Pond before they could be stopped."
Nottingham Paper.

"We all make mistakes," as they explained to the children, panting.



NON-STOP TRAFFIC CONTROL

"H"

"Mr. Garbo-Jones suggested in Parliament yesterday," said Edith, peering over the top of *The Times*, "that in future films shouldn't be just 'U' and 'A,' but 'U,' 'A,' and 'H.' It just shows that people *do* sometimes talk sense in Parliament. I don't generally read the debates, but *The Times* happened to be open at that page and I just hadn't the strength to turn over."

I asked her what sort of films would come in the "H" category—Hopeless, Historical or Highbrow.

"Horror," she said. "Apparently Mr. Garbo-Jones has had some very upsetting experiences lately, going into cinemas thinking he was to see a sweet romance of love in a cottage and finding the film absolutely infested with men with glaring eyes and a tendency to murder their rich uncles by throwing them into cauldrons of boiling wax and afterwards exhibiting them to the public as genuine waxworks, thus obtaining sixpences from innocent citizens under false pretences. Mr. Garbo-Jones thinks that all horror films should be classified as 'H' so that only those who really enjoy having their blood curdled need go to see them."

I pondered.

"It certainly isn't a bad idea," I said, "but I don't think just a plain 'H' would be much use, because there are so many different degrees of horror. One man likes to have his hair stand on end but objects to his heart leaping to his mouth; another doesn't care what his heart does so long as his blood neither freezes nor curdles. If they are to be classified at all, I think it should be in the same way as hotels are classified in the *Road Book*, but with 'H's' instead of stars. One 'H' for a mildly horrible film, two 'H's' for a slighly more horrible film, and so on. Let's work out a schedule and send it to Mr. Garbo-Jones."

So we got busy and produced the following:—

"H."–Films containing doors opened and shut by unseen hands, family portraits with eyes that move, snakes that crawl down bed-ropes, mysterious Chinamen who smile cynically, or platinum blondes with silvery laughs.

"HH.—Films containing rooms with ceilings that descend and crush (nearly) the heroes and/or the heroines to pulp. Films in which quite respectable citizens are changed into frogs, werewolves or crooners. Films in which elderly ladies on retiring to bed find human skeletons in great numbers between the sheets.

"HHH."—Films in which mummies (the Egyptian sort) are discovered to have climbed out of their cases and substituted poisoned professors whose lovely daughters track them down with the aid of feminine intuition and a hero with a small black moustache. Films containing coffins which open slowly and from which white hands emerge. Films about faceless half-brothers, vampires, and Virginian Colonels.

"I think that covers about everything," said Edith, "because of course nobody objects nowadays to ordinary gang-murders or train-wrecks or kidnappings. It is generally recognised that such incidents are the mere give-and-take of (American) civilised life."

"But I think we ought to have an 'HHHH' category," I said. "If the managers of our hotels can rise to five degrees of discomfort, surely film producers can rise to at least four degrees of horror."

We gave the matter a good deal more thought, and at last remembered that we had omitted perhaps the most nerve-racking of all types of horror film—the story of the simple unsophisticated maid who shrieks herself after much tribulation into stardom.

Such films we decided to recommend to Mr. Garbo-Jones should be definitely "HHHH."

Mr. Silvertop's Submarine Cousin

"I WAS just a-thinking," said Mr. Silvertop, having to his satisfaction converted his small black pipe into an angry furnace—"I was just a-thinking what 'ighly unsuitable moments folks choose for 'eated discussion.

"What set me off was reading about them two acrobats 'oo come unstuck the other day over a circus-ring on account of an 'ell of an argy-bargy what developed in mid-air as to whether Zulus was sun-worshippers or a kind of Presbyterians. And that reminded me of the one reel disagreement my old granddad and grandma ever 'ad, over whether snakes could swim, what started sudden-like as they was walking to their wedding and went on 'and-over-fist all through the service. Just nerves, of course, for as soon as they'd got clear of the vestry they couldn't remember what side each 'ad took or 'oo'd begun it.

"But, come to think of it, the queerest background for 'ot words I ever 'eard of was when my Cousin Jasper lost 'is wool on the bottom of the Indian Ocean—leastways if it wasn't the Indian Ocean then it was one of them biggish stretches of water to the right of the map.

"After the War pore Jasper went back to 'is old job of diving, and got let down so bad by a girl in America 'e near went potty, but 'e pulled 'imself together and got took on by a salvage company out East. 'E did very well for 'em, and after a time 'e got put on a special job a-raising bullion from a boat what 'ad been torpedoed.

"Well, one morning, just as the tug was about to leave 'arbour, they found the second diver 'ad gone and got mumps, so the manager 'e told 'em to carry on out to the wreck and 'e'd borrow another diver and send 'im along in the launch. Jasper could see the launch coming up on 'em as 'e was being lowered, so in 'arf-an-hour or so when a second diver was let down beside 'im where 'e was fixing explosive to blow away part of the 'old, and waved 'is tin mitten at 'im, 'e wasn't surprised.

"But 'e ses you could 'ave knocked 'im down with a feather, in spite of 'is winter-weight suit, when 'e 'appened to spot the other bloke a-kicking 'is left 'eel with 'is right toe—a trick 'e'd only known one man 'ave under-water before, and that 'ad been Joe Mullins, 'oo 'e'd last seen in Texas the night before Joe 'ad run away with 'is girl.

"'E was pretty certain, but to clinch it 'e went over and shone 'is lamp into the other bloke's window, and sure enough there was Joe's dial inside. Joe only 'ad to shine 'is glim into Jasper's window, which 'e did, for the parties to be what you might call all set. And pretty silly they must 'ave looked, a-standing glowering at each other through a forest of seaweed 'eaven knows 'ow deep down under somebody else's sea.

"Jasper was the first to recover. 'E ses 'e'd 'ave socked Joe on the jaw right away, only socking a metal jaw with a metal 'and don't do no good to nobody. So instead 'e barks into 'is telephone at 'is mate on the tug's deck above, 'Ullo there! I want to pass the time of day with this other gent down 'ere, so ask 'is mate to phone down to 'im what I ses. You can start by telling 'im 'e 'asn't been out of my thoughts in eighteen months, and when I gets 'im upstairs out of 'is ruddy sardine-tin I'll show 'im what I means.'

"In a moment back comes a message from Joe through the two mates up on deck that 'e thinks it 's about time Jasper let bygones be bygones. 'Oh, 'e does, does 'e?' cries Jasper, 'opping-mad. 'Well, tell 'im I'll make 'im a bygoner in two shakes soon as I gets the chance.'

"'If 'e wants trouble,' Joe replies, 'e can 'ave it. I've fried little worms like 'im for the dog's dinner afore now.'

"'The skunk!' yells Jasper. 'Tell 'im it makes me feel proper 'orrid to be under the same sea with 'im. Tell 'im——'

"But that was as far as they got 'urling booketts at each other. The blokes on deck couldn't make out the sudden 'ush, but they 'adn't seen what Jasper 'ad, swimming out very slow from a big 'ole in the foredeck. Jasper ses the nearest 'e can describe it it was like a monster rocking-'orse tricked out like a lobster, only where its dial should 'ave been was a great bunch of tentacles, and it took its bearings by one flat round eye in the middle of its tummy what kept winking like a camera-shutter in a way what meant business.

"'—— Tell 'im,' Jasper croaked, 'to take a decko be'ind 'im at what the fishmonger's sent—*and for the love of Mike wind us up like 'ell!*'

"Pore Joe screwed 'is 'ead round and nearly fell over when 'e sees what's coming. The brute makes a bee-line for 'em, about five ton of nightmare in a wicked temper. Joe tried to prod it in the eye as it closed with 'em, but 'e wasn't dressed for sparring, and in a jiffy it got a brace of tentacles round 'im. By this time they was both being wound up fast, but they 'ad a long way to rise. Jasper managed to unsheathe a knife and 'ave a shot at cutting Joe free, and though 'e ses it was like trying to amputate an elephant's trunk it gives Joe a chance to get out 'is blade too. Between 'em they slashed and jabbed away like madmen, and every time one of 'em 'it the target the brute let out a few gallons of printing-ink, which made things just as tricky for 'im as for them, though 'e 'adn't the savvy to tumble to it. If either of 'em 'ad been alone 'e'd 'ave settled their 'ash in a moment, but together they just kept 'im distracted-like till they broke surface, and then they both threw a dizzy and left their mates to finish off the job with a rifle.

"When they come to they was lying out on deck in the sun, tired but 'appy. Joe was the first 'oo spoke. 'Ever so sorry about pinching Ivy like that, Jasper,' 'e ses, shylike.

"'That wasn't nothing at all,' ses Jasper, as 'earty as 'e can make it. 'Ere's all the best to the pair of you!'

"'Thanks, old man,' ses Joe, 'but she's not with me no more.'

"'Not with *you*?' Jasper cries. 'You don't mean she's 'opped it again?'

"'Went off with a little perisher named 'Udson a week after she married me,' ses Joe.

"'Corlumme! The little twister!' ses Jasper, and neither of 'em spoke for a bit. Then Joe 'e ses, 'Between you and me, Jasper, did you find she chattered you near silly?'

"Jasper 'e nods. 'Joe,' 'e ses, 'did you ever want to scream something awful the way she squinted into 'er tea-cup?' And Joe 'e nods too. And then all of a sudden the two of 'em shakes 'ands and 'eaves a great sigh.

"What only goes to show," said Mr. Silvertop. ERIC.



"MAY I SPEAK TO O, PLEASE?"



"YER SEE FLORRIE CAN'T MARRY HIM YET COS 'ER LAST ONE HASN'T BEEN MADE OBSOLETE."

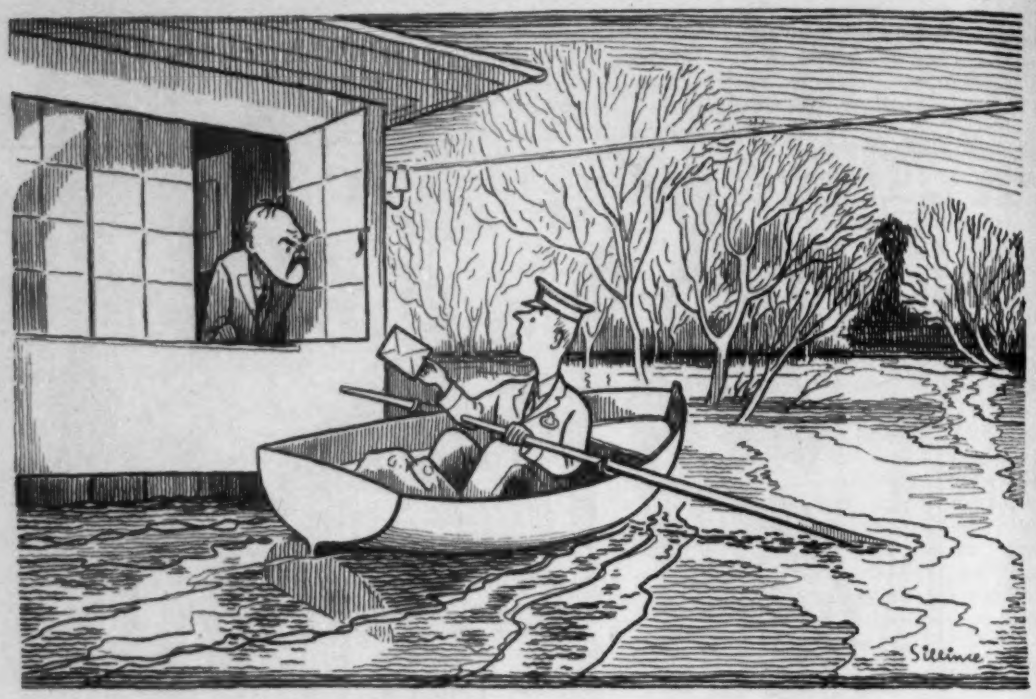
A Rabbit's Reply

["It used to be a treat to play with a real golf-ball. Now we have a ball that really plays the game for you."—*From a letter sent by* ALEC HERD *to the Press.*]

No, ALEC HERD,
Pardon me, but your statement is absurd.
"The ball that plays the game" for me
Has never been nor ever shall be found;
And if you doubt my word,
Just come and see.

Somewhere, maybe,
On the thyme-scented ground
That slopes towards a warm untroubled sea
Which circles round
The longed-for Islands of the Blest,
Where eyes are never lifted off the tee,
Where feet upon the turf are firmly pressed,
Nor sags the peccant knee—
There, where no sound
Of sudden cursing smites the ambient air,
It may befall that we,
The rabbits of our earthly pilgrimage,
Shall in plus-fours appear,
Harbingers of a Golden Age,
And in your strange delusion, ALEC, share,
Dreaming that some more cunning Dædalus
Has wrought a ball that plays the game for us,
But, oh! not here, not here.

H. C. B.



"YES, YES, I'M ROBINSON. AND DON'T YOU DARE SAY ANYTHING ABOUT CRUSOE."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Wisdom, Wit and Brevity

FROM somewhere in the heart of England *A Rustic Moralist* (PUTNAM, 7/6) looks at the world—and sometimes beyond it. His rusticity precludes neither a high degree of civilisation nor a discreetly modulated urbanity, for his name is WILLIAM RALPH INGE. The range of his vision is wide, embracing subjects unhappily so far separate as dictators and euthanasia. Most of the half-hundred essays with which he here presents us are extremely brief; they are written, with one or two exceptions, that he who runs for his bus may read; but all are packed with the wisdom and experience of a mind which is as richly nourished as it is nicely balanced. Aspects of religion, psychology and social life, of politics, science and education are in turn surveyed, and each is illuminated. On the basis of certain old-fashioned but securely established absolutes Dr. INGE allows his keen intelligence free play, disliking dogma and authoritarianism as he dislikes stupidity, sentimentality and vulgarity. And on those his wit has little mercy. Paradox he avoids and probably despises; of epigram he is frugal; but of aphorism he is a master. As his publisher prettily puts it, he is the dean of English essayists. Nor need it be added that with a lively appreciation of the temporal goes an apprehension of spiritual experience which is here particularly illustrated in one memorable paper.

The Drama Delivered from its Friends

A French attaché who shared the pre-War London of CAMBON remarked in his memoirs that the English theatre had destroyed one of the best audiences in the world. He omitted, however, to record the critic's part in this process of attrition, a lack which Mr. SEAN O'CASEY has brilliantly supplied in *The Flying Wasp* (MACMILLAN, 6/-). This stimulating, pungent and overwhelmingly necessary indictment of our devitalised and coddled drama and its pontifical appraisers has to my mind one or two set-backs. It entirely ignores the main problem: how an ardent and self-respecting public for any art can possibly issue from the England of to-day. Its constructive propaganda is not strengthened by the playwright's odd preference for the least profound of his own plays. And the accusation that none of us so much as quotes SHAKESPEARE has been strikingly refuted by the Archbishop of CANTERBURY. Still, these are comparative trifles; and the book itself, for all its enjoyable lightness of touch, is no trifle. It has a deep sense of the value of dramatic literature, of what has been done to give this stage life, and of what might yet be accomplished by the right sort of National Theatre.

Sverige

Time was when I fancied that I knew something of Sweden and its language. But on reflection that time was a long while ago—towards the close of the last century, to be exact—and it was interesting to revive my impressions of the country by reading *Lodgers in Sweden* (FABER AND FABER, 12/6), by ROMILLY and KATHERINE

JOHN. At first I confess I was slightly nervous: it looked as though the ingenuousness of the young couple who set out to discover these unknown barbarians of the North might prove rather trying after some four hundred pages. But fortunately Mr. and Mrs. JOHN, after a mildly facetious start, got fairly into their stride by the time their cargo-boat had conveyed them safely to Stockholm. They had the advantage over most writing travellers that they were really anxious to save money, and consequently they had interviews with various landladies trying to find lodgings that were at once cheap and reasonably comfortable, And they did not spend all their time in the capital by any means. They had six months before them, and they apportioned the time between a singularly uncomfortable room in Stockholm, a farm by the side of a lake inland, and a little fishing village on the west coast that was on the way to becoming a seaside resort. What seems to have struck the authors most, after the difficulty of the language and the intense desire of most male Swedes to air their stock of English however small, was the inadequate size of the beds, the impossibility of getting hot (or strong) coffee, the poor supply of native literature, and the inferior quality of native painting and sculpture. But they have contrived to make an interesting and amusing volume out of their various trials.

1851 And All That

When Mr. Punch, through DOUGLAS JERROLD, christened the Crystal Palace he added a triumphant touch of glamour to a precarious and much-contested scheme. A Royal Commission and a Charter, an inaugural dinner of turtle and ortolan, the benevolence of PRINCE ALBERT, the ardour of ALBERT'S wife, culminated in the happy title that turned a dull industrial exhibition into a Cockney fairy-tale. And it is as a blend of these elements that the whole career of the structure is wisely and wittily related by Mr. CHRISTOPHER HOBHOUSE. He certainly under-rates PRINCE ALBERT—a royal prince who knew pre-eminently well how to play the regal part of patron; but he does discern virtue in such unfashionable figures as PUGIN. Contemporary illustrations and a discriminating text depict the personnel and material of the Great Exhibition. Poor BERTIE, in a kilt, clutches the hand of a begartered mama; DISRAELI meets the earliest of his old charmers by the Crystal Fountain; the IRON DUKE objects to sight-seeing schoolchildren who "move in strings." The exhibits are even more ugly and various than the visitors; and now it is all over I can imagine no more admirable monument than *1851 and the Crystal Palace* (MURRAY, 7/6).



ANY PORT IN A STORM

University Piece

Mr. HILTON BROWN has made the background of *The Hare of Cloud* (BLES, 7/6) the life of a great new Scottish university, and, as would seem right with that setting, sends a crowd of small figures scurrying to and fro before it. Among them are two pairs of lovers, idealistic and materialistic; *Sir Ludovic Inches*, the Principal; *Lord Abercloud*, the new Lord Rector; *Ivor Calder* and his band of undergraduates, male and female, who have bitterly opposed the Rector's election; professors, their wives and daughters; the University secretary and his brother-in-law—a reporter on the local paper—Town and Gown clashing violently; and over

and above these, St. Gunegilde, the University's patron, and the mythical Hare of Cloud, adept at finding hidden treasure. On the whole the story scarcely comes up to its promise, but Mr. HILTON BROWN has scored heavily in making every one of his many characters distinct, vivid and true to type, even to the extent that, though his real hero, *Micky Hext*, lecturer in Humanity, is an irritatingly foolish young man with the qualities more usually bestowed by women-novelists upon their elect, one cannot deny his sensitive charm and intrinsic goodness.

The Romantic Painters

Mr. W. GAUNT has chosen *Bandits in a Landscape* (THE STUDIO, LTD., 10/6), the title or description of several pictures by SALVATOR ROSA, as the name for a book about romantic painting "from CARAVAGGIO to DELACROIX." He has written a study of the romantic state of mind and its expression in art from the end of the seventeenth century to the middle of the nineteenth, and the story is full of interest, even if you know little of the work of the artists concerned. The author is admirably incisive in describing a picture, lucid in explaining the conditions that gave it birth, and skilful in showing its connection with earlier work and later; and he gives imaginative liveliness to the brief biographies of these romantic painters, all of whom had in their character something that he calls, speaking of RICHARD WILSON (1714–1782), "spiritual banditry." The writing is polished and decorative but exact, with a touch of preciousness here and there which eminently suits the subject; and there are forty (most of them full-page) plates.



"BUT OF COURSE SOMEBODY ELSE WILL HAVE TO BE PRIME MINISTER WHILE HE'S SWIMMING THE CHANNEL."

Conversation Piece

Mr. MARTIN BOYD has something of "SAKI'S" knack of writing lightly about people who take themselves very heavily, and his novel, *The Picnic* (DENT, 7/6), is so full of conversations that reading it is like listening to bright (and sometimes too brilliant) chatter at a party. It is difficult to say much about the plot because the book is made up of a series of sub-plots—the descent of his brother's blatant widow on the village vicar, the attempted love-affairs of another widow, the heroics of a grass-widow and a burglary. Plumbridge was full of queer people before the Australians took The Hall. Then *Matty*, who was a Plumbridge but diffident and more interested in culture than the County, with her sister-in-law and two sons (one a handsome savage and the other a snob), became mixed up in its affairs. Mr. BOYD is at his best when speaking through the mouths of highbrows, but he is always amusing and sometimes really witty. I felt after reading as though I had actually been to the picnic: it was a little tiring but very good fun, and I should like to meet some of the people again, though not as close neighbours.

Pomps, Ceremonies and Claims

So much information, pleasantly imparted, can be gleaned from EUPHAN and KLAXON'S *Stories of the Coronation* (BURNS, OATES AND WASHBOURNE, 3/6) that it can be recommended to old as well as young. Those who are preparing speeches on the crowning event of next May would assuredly be wise to consult it, and at the same time children can be trusted to enjoy history that is related without the smallest pretentiousness or condescension. After reminding us, in a preface, that "the Coronation is a great religious ceremony," EUPHAN and KLAXON go on to say that its story is a true and lovely one, which "has the power to conjure up the whole of our history." To these statements I would like to add that it is also in some respects most entertaining. It amused me, for example, to hear that the Archbishop of CANTERBURY, at the Coronation of GEORGE IV., claimed the right "to furnish a Mess of Dillegrout," and that up to the time of GEORGE II. there was a King's Cock Crower, whose duties were to crow the hour in the palace grounds "every night all through Lent." An instructive and diverting volume.

Policemen

If our sensational novelists are to be relied upon there must be a large number of people in the world who constantly suffer from murderous attacks because willy-nilly they have acquired information dangerous to criminals. *John Rutherford* was one of these many unfortunates, and while reading *Murder in Blue* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 7/6) I sympathised with him all the more because he had no idea why anyone should so determinedly desire his death. This is Mr. CLIFFORD WITTING'S first novel, and he has avoided most of the pitfalls that lie in wait for those who write detective stories. His police, for instance, are neither intensely stupid nor miraculously clever, and a boy-sleuth is entertaining because he does not overplay his part. Let me, however, beg Mr. WITTING in his next book to make his readers' way easier by giving them some maps. Diagrams and maps are always welcome in tales of this *genre*, and here they cry aloud for inclusion.

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Charivaria

We learn that the War Office is to provide more home-like buildings for soldiers. Housing authorities will of course continue to provide more barrack-like buildings for civilians.

★ ★ ★

An anonymous Scottish dramatist has written a Grand Guignol thriller. It is denied that his name is McAbre.

★ ★ ★

A man told the magistrate in a London police court that the only reason he got drunk was because Oxford won the Boat-Race. We trust that his thirteen years' good conduct was taken into consideration.

★ ★ ★

"New Designs on Our Coinage," reads a heading. Mr. Neville Chamberlain again, we fear.

★ ★ ★

A pawnbroker recently got married to one of his customers. She just walked in and popped the question.

★ ★ ★



Experts are still doing their best to find oil in Britain. It is funny that they haven't yet thought of looking under old cars.

★ ★ ★

"If roast beef is the national dish of England, what is the national dish of France?" asks a writer. *Blum pouding, hein?*

★ ★ ★

Burglars who broke into an hotel at 2 A.M. drank a bottle of whisky. Ignorance of the Licensing Laws is no excuse.

★ ★ ★

Two Scots are to attempt the Channel-swim this year. It is pleasant to think that they may possibly swim into each other's ken.



"Number of French tourists falling," says an item. Why on earth don't they look where they are going?

★ ★ ★

During a village concert the stage gave way and the vocalist fell through. He was accompanied by a friend at the piano.

★ ★ ★

A new flower discovered in Central Africa is to be called Niffidollophantissianthemum. It has been explained to it that of course all the good names have already gone.

★ ★ ★



"Few men wake up nowadays to find themselves rich," says a schoolmaster. He seems to have overlooked heavyweight boxers.

★ ★ ★

Mussolini is described by a correspondent as being very considerate to his household staff. So he isn't a Nero to his valet anyway.

★ ★ ★

"British trunks and suitcases are the best in the world," it is claimed. In short, our luggage is in the van.

★ ★ ★

An American author is said to have written a fifty-thousand-word novel without using the letter "e." We not very hopefully await a volume of Memoirs in which the author makes no use of the letter "I."

★ ★ ★



"I would give my life for my cat," declares a pet-lover. Making ten in all?

★ ★ ★

"The stupidity of some Hollywood producers makes one reel," declares a critic. Too often, alas, it makes several.

When Bolonsky Danced Belushka

QUARTET

Or ballet fans we are the cream,
We never miss a night;
The ballet is our only theme,
Our Russian accent is a dream,
We say the name of every *prim-*
A ballerina right.
The ballet is our meat and drink,
It is our staff of life,
Our prop, our safety-valve, our link,
Our vice, our passion, foible, kink,
The ballet is, we really think,
Our mistress and our wife.

It's true that many lesser clans
For ballet also thirst,
But they are merely *nouveaux* fans,
It's we who liked it first,
And we who know it best, becos—
Ask any connoisseur—
The ballet isn't what it was
When we were what we were.

Oh, the urge
To see Serge!
What a thrill!
What a pill!
What a purge!
So adept
When he leapt,
We were dumb,
Overcome,
Overswept!

When Bolonsky danced *Belushka* in September, 1910,
What a wonderful night that was! What a wonderful sight that was!
We are positive that nobody has really danced since then!
How pellucid! how light he was! Like an angel in flight he was!

He jumped *comme çi*,
He jumped *comme ça*,
We can't precisely show you how,
But when he stamped,
Ra-ta-ta-ta!
Well, don't you wish you'd seen him now?
Ah! when Bolonsky danced *Belushka* in September, 1910,
How his miming elated us! How his timing prostrated us!
When Bolonsky danced *Belushka*, as we keep on saying—when
He was just at the peak of it—oh, we hardly can speak of it!
Something happened then you'll never, never, never, never see,
So don't talk about these others but apply your mind to me,
And though we've told you so before, we *must* repeat again—
When Bolonsky danced Belushka *in September, 1910!*

Though to-day's *Boutique Fantasque*'ll do for Haskell and his lot,
It is not good enough for us! It is rather too rough for us!
We miss the old precision, on the beat and on the dot,
When Bolonsky attacked a scene in *Giselle* or in *Lac des Cygnes*.
In *Igor* too
He used to do
Such cataclysmic, cosmic things!
While in *Sylphides*,
We're all agreed
One night *we really saw his wings!*
When Bolonsky danced *Belushka* in September, 1910,
How poetic! How lyrical! What a feat! What a miracle!
Oh, the sighing of the women and the swooning of the men!
When he twiddled and twirled for us he created a world for us!
How we screamed and shrieked and shouted, how we whooped and how we howled!
We were ravished and uprooted, we were frankly disembowelled!
You will never know the throb, the glow, the bliss that we knew then,
When Bolonsky danced Belushka *in September, 1910!*



"YOU KNOW, I REALLY CAN'T THINK WHAT THE LANDLORD WOULD DO IF HE FOUND OUT WE KEPT A PET ON THE PREMISES."

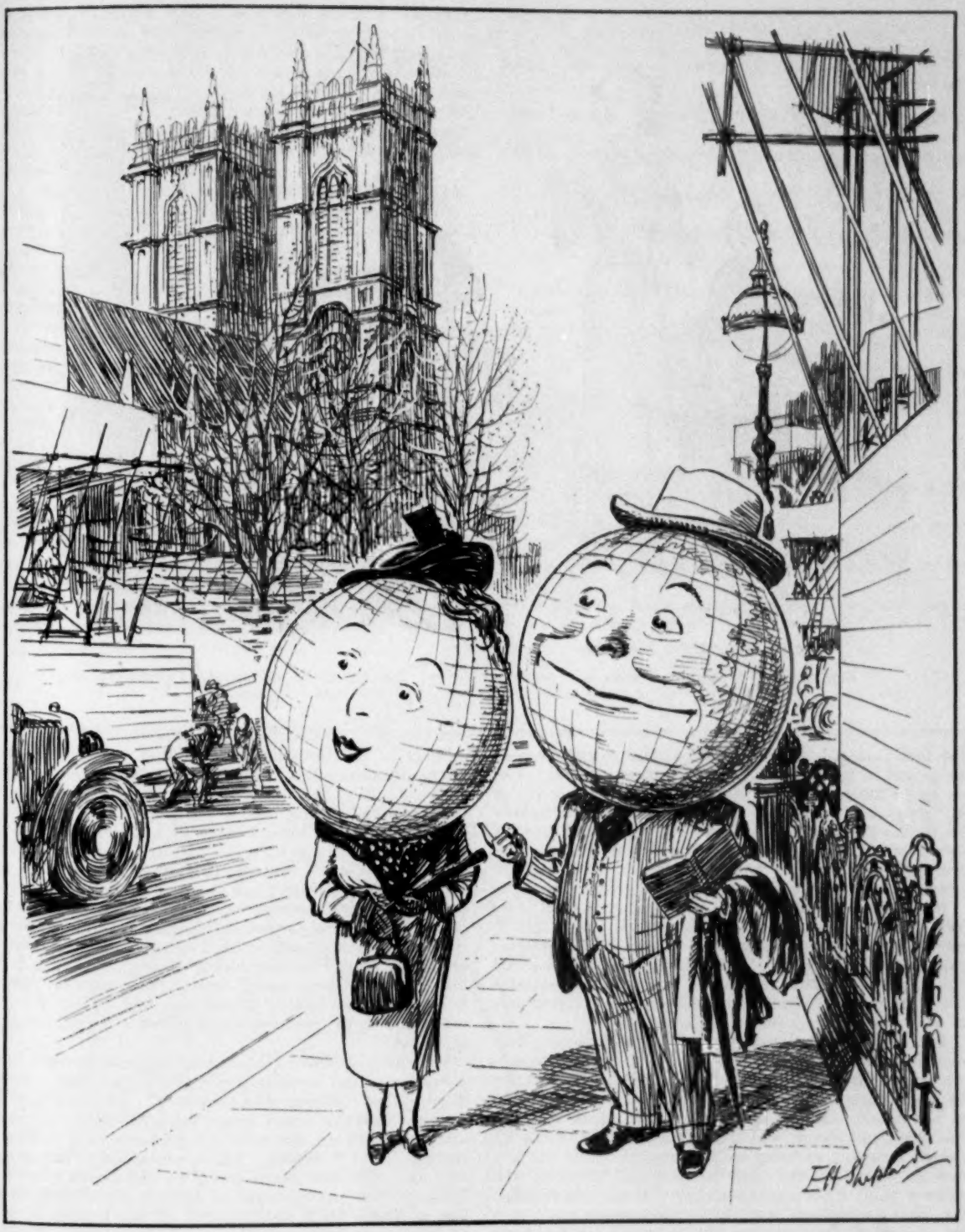
The Disrespectful Camera

LIFE in Germany by all accounts is a little difficult nowadays. The penal code, published a few months ago, includes under the list of punishable offences—

(1) Inciting a person to commit suicide.
(2) Preparing to commit a murder, whether the murder is carried out or not.
(3) Publicly ridiculing marriage.
(4) Strikes and lock-outs.
(5) Betrayal of industrial secrets.
(6) Assaults upon German honour, with especially severe punishment for verbal attacks upon Herr HITLER; offensive matter dug up from past history will be punished regardless of whether the statements are true or not.
(7) Disparagement of venerable men and women of the German past, such as HINDENBURG and HORST WESSEL . . .

and so on.

At first glance most of these do not seem to strike too deeply at the liberty of the average individual. Granted,



WELCOME TO LONDON

OR, THE WORLD AND HIS WIFE IN TOWN



"JUST BECAUSE I ARRIVE AT WORK TEN MINUTES LATE YOU NEEDN'T BE SO BRUTAL, MR. PETTIGREW. OH, YES, YOU DID—I SAW YOU. YOU GLANCED QUITE SAVAGELY AT YOUR WATCH AS I WALKED IN."

the fact that it becomes a penal offence to tell someone to go and hang himself is rather disconcerting; but few of us spend much time in "betraying industrial secrets" or in "preparing to commit a murder." When we murder we do it extempore, so to speak; and any member of the secret police who snooped around trying to catch us stropping the razor or having a spot of quiet revolver practice at a lay figure would be wasting his time.

Nevertheless, although I doubt if the penal code bears very heavily on the average citizen in his private life, it must hit a number of people very hard in the professional capacities. Number 3, for example, must have called for some hasty "cutting" in the repertoire of red-nosed comedians. And Numbers 6 and 7 practically put writers of their reminiscences out of business.

But the new penal code was issued in November last, and since then there have been a number of developments which make it even more difficult for the keen Nazi citizen to make an honest living, particularly, for some reason, in Nuremburg. Firstly, if you remember, there was that business about literary and artistic criticism. Dr. GOEBBELS (whom I suspect of being an unsuccessful author under a *nom de plume*) uttered that decree which all of us who write or paint or act or sing must have felt was long overdue, viz., that the business of a critic is not to waste space on a lot of fault-finding criticism but to appreciate the work which he is reporting. And Herr JULIUS STREICHER (ever practical) promptly forced half-a-dozen eminent theatrical critics on to the stage and made them attempt a tap-dance for the amusement of the chorus of a musical-comedy.

Now, as Dr. GOEBBELS insists that critics must be "men of mature age," and Herr STREICHER apparently expects them to be as lithe as chorus-girls, it will be seen that the job of being a critic in Germany is not getting any easier. Personally, I don't mind. I have long thought it was time something was done about critics, and if the matter ended there I would welcome that bit of Nazi ideology in England. But it *doesn't* end there. What are we to say, for example, to the recent decree which must spell ruin to every monumental mason in Nuremburg? "Polished marble tombstones, gold-lettered epitaphs and other signs of human vanity" are forbidden. Surely, *surely* this is a little hard? There are, I submit, few more harmless professions than making tombstones, and here at a blow every line in the business which shows a decent margin is cut out.

But the final blow to the Nuremburg trader is seen in a paragraph in my evening paper which announces a new drive against "disrespectful postcards." At first glance I imagined that this merely meant those odd highly-coloured affairs showing an enormously fat woman in a bathing-costume. But it doesn't. Those, presumably, have gone long ago. The new decree issued by the Mayor refers to "disrespectful reproductions of historic Nuremburg sites and of Third Reich institutions." So the trouble is not fat women in bathing-costumes but disrespectful photographs of the Town Hall.

Now, without disrespect to the Mayor of Nuremburg, I simply do not understand. A disrespectful photograph of a person, yes. Those flashlight photographs taken at Hunt

balls, which make one look like a nigger or as though one is fuddled with drink have often struck me as disrespectful or even libellous. Or a disrespectful *drawing* of a building—again yes. That would be one which made the place look like a workhouse or as though it were about to fall down. But I cannot for the life of me see how one would decide whether a photograph of an historic site were disrespectful, respectful or obsequious. One can control criticisms and tombstones, but the GEORGE WASHINGTON frankness of the camera is proverbial.

I cannot help feeling sorry, therefore, for the man who sells picture-postcards in Nuremburg. You can imagine him perspiring gently as he goes through his stock, trying desperately to decide whether it is disrespectful to have a glossy finish on a picture of a mediæval street, or whether that view of an historic site will land him in trouble because the sunshine isn't respectful enough.

Still, there it is. Nuremburg has the honour of being the scene of the annual Nazi Party Congress, and I suppose it is only reasonable to expect it to give a cultural lead to the rest of the Reich. But if I go to live in Nuremburg I shall avoid being a critic or a low comedian or a monumental mason or an author or a vendor of postcards. I shall go hard after the job of Mayor. It will be so much simpler.

P.S.—I have consulted someone who knows all about the picture-postcards of Nuremburg, and the matter has become a lot clearer. Apparently the postcards referred to are those like one gets of the cathedral at Rouen. I thought only the French thought that was funny. Sorry, Mr. Mayor!

No Room

["It will not be possible to wear spectacles with civilian gas-masks, it was stated on inquiry at the Home Office."
Liverpool Daily Post.]

"OH, Grandpa, see the aeroplanes, they look as small as toys;
And listen—that's the sound of bombs, a pleasant booming noise."
"I cannot see," the ancient says (a heavy sigh he checks),
"For they haven't left enough room in the gas-mask for my specs."

"Outside old Mrs. Thompson's shop the guns stand in a row,
And that one at the end, Grandpa, is worked by Auntie Flo."
"I'd like to see your aunt at work—a credit to her sex,
But they haven't left enough room in the gas-mask for my specs."

"The gunboat in the harbour is about to open fire;
Those aeroplanes are frightened 'cos they're climbing yet still higher."
The old man lifts his quavering voice while children crane their necks:
"I wish they'd left enough room in this gas-mask for my specs."



"IS ALL THAT FOR ARTHUR?"
"NO, IT'S FOR YOU."
"COO—WHAT A LITTLE!"

Word-Skirmish

OUR congratulations to the last Senior Proctor of Oxford University, who in his farewell oration said:—

"An Oxford training should inculcate precision of thought and a critical examination and employment of words."

But several shocked warriors have remarked that a little later the learned Proctor said:—

"No fewer than seventy-two clubs are licensed by the Proctors, embracing every facet of social and intellectual activity";

and they have asked me to warn you, Bobby, against the embracing of facets.

The Proctor might reply that he has a good defence, for "facet" is "a little face." But on the whole, Bobby, I do advise you against the embracing of facets.

Unique

"Editor's Note: Many other readers have written saying that they possess these *unique* jugs."

Protagonist

This week's prize for the worst piece of protagonist-work goes to *The Sunday Times* correspondent at Durban:—

"Protagonists of the Indian mynah and the 'Jacky Hangman' became indignant when the question of the destruction of these birds was raised at the quarterly meeting of the Bird Protection Society . . ."

As I have wearily explained to you, before, Bobby, a protagonist is *not* one who is *pro* something: he is the principal combatant or performer. It might be pedantic to insist upon this if "protagonist" was usefully filling a tiresome gap or it was a very jolly and attractive word. But it is not: and "champion," "advocate" and "defender" do the same work better.

"Previous, and prior to"

"Previous to this there will be a light entertainment."

". . . prior to Christmas will the Government appoint a Committee . . .?"

In certain circles nothing happens "before" and few things happen "after." "Following" has got me beat and I give up. The next thing, I suppose, will be "posterior to," as in

"Posterior to the day's work he went home."

EXERCISE

Where do the following passages occur?—

"Prior to the morning watch, I say, prior to the morning watch."

"The Sunday called Quinquagesima or the next Sunday prior to Lent."

"Issues"

A Special Prize goes to the warrior who discovered this:—

"It is abominable that the issues should be butchered to make a seaside holiday shocker for English people."—*Mr. John Langdon-Davies.*

This is the first butchered issue to be recorded.

Here too is a nice piece:—

". . . a sharp reminder that other issues are not standing still."—*Morning Post.*

If any collector has a walking or a running issue, we will swap it for the following:—

"SOFT SOAPING THE ELECTORS

During the last election the human issues were blurred by the lavish use of soft soap."—*Mr. Lloyd George, as reported in "The Star."*

Some teasing problems here. According to the sub-editor the soft soap was used on the electors: and I suppose they got some into their eyes, so that their vision of the human issues was blurred. But did the speaker mean this? *I* think he meant that soft soap was lavishly used on the *issues*. But soft soap, lavishly used, is cleansing—that is what it is for. Why then were the issues blurred?

Easter Metaphor Handicap

FIRST PRIZE

"We don't want these houses hanging round our necks like white elephants."
At a Rural District Council Meeting.

SECOND PRIZE

"They even want now (and this is the thin edge of the wedge) to cut up the Horse Shoe Common and put a car park there. . . . They have been so smart as to put things into the papers to serve as blinkers for our eyes. But the fact remains, as soon as they begin to nibble they will go the whole hog."—*A Mayor.*

I thank the Mayor especially for the last sentence, for it has led me into research concerning the origin of "going the whole hog." *The Oxford English Dictionary* says: "Many conjectural explanations have been offered. But *cf.* COWPER, *Hypocrisy Detected* (1779) 12 [by J. NEWTON.] But for one piece they thought it hard From the whole hog to be debarred; And set their wit at work to find What joint the Prophet had in mind. *Ibid* 22 Thus, Conscience freed from every dog, Mahometans eat up the hog."

So the Mayor, it seems, is right. But if this is the true explanation, Bobby, we should use the expression only where the action is a guilty one and not where it is merely thorough. But you will not pay the smallest attention to this. And how right you will be!

THIRD PRIZE

"We shall leave no stone unturned, we shall leave no channel unexplored until we have smashed the Football Pools."
An Official of the Football League.

Avenue Medal

"Then they could say every avenue had been pursued."—*A Councillor.*

Really?

"One advantage of the lighting system of signalling is that the distances between running trains can be shortened in many cases by 100 per cent."—*The Times.*

Spring Medal for Headlines

"TELEVISION SABOTAGE BID"
Sunday Paper.

Some Lovely Words

Someone was lecturing recently on the need for new words. Here are a few.

In West London, over the entrance of a sort of "Fun Fair," you may see in bright lights this happy union between Ancient Greece and Modern England:—

"PLAYDIUM"

"Several 'Leftist' Members of the House of Commons . . ."—*Australian Paper.*

"UNIFORMED PORTERAGE"
Advertisement of Flats.

"THE J. JONES BOOTERIE"
From New England.

"The Chinese language has undergone a process of polysyllablisation."

"The Chinese are not tonality-conscious."—*A Lecturer in China.*

". . . Press chief of Germany's *eportage.*"—*Samoa Government Paper.*

"We could effect you considerable *savation.*"—*Business Letter.*

(As my warrior says well, the inventor of this word deserves a damn good hidation.)

The Adhesive Man

". . . An example of how one man . . . could do a big thing for the country and Empire through sheer force of character or *stickability.*"—*The Chief Scout, as reported in a letter to "The Times."*

But a "lovable" man, Bobby, is one who gets loved: and a "stickable" must be one who gets stuck. However . . .

"The fine rendration of Miss Morgan made the service a memorable one."
Local Paper.

"CERTIFIED PRACTIPEDIST"

(The son of Cheshire thus described is, I am told, a cobbler.)



Mother. "SIR WALTER RALEIGH, WHO WAS A VERY GREAT GENTLEMAN——"
Daughter. "BUT, MUMMY, THERE WEREN'T ANY THEN. GEORGE THE FOURTH WAS THE FIRST GENTLEMAN IN EUROPE."

De-re-work

"He expressed the hope that some adequate provision would be made in the Bill for the representation of these detribalised and unretribalisable natives."
South African Paper.

"The two governors were flung by the enraged nobles from the windows of the Royal Castle of Prague. A revolutionary government . . . was set up the next day after this *defenestration.*"—*A History of Czechoslovakia.*

"Safe storage for your furs. First they are air-cleaned and then *de-mothised* by the new gas sterilization."—*Canadian Paper.*

In reply to a refusal, a firm of solicitors express regret at their client's "*declinature.*"

"Masculinized undergarments." — *Advertisement, American Paper.*

". . . it also constituted the first occasion or one of the first occasions on which the *cancellizing* of War Debts was mentioned. . . ."—*Letter to "The Times."*

"FOUR SQUARE CHURCH

Sunday, 7.30 P.M. 'Creation to the offering up of Isaac,' in beautiful, hand-painted, colored stereoptican slides, given evangelistically as the Holy Spirit *unctionizes.*"—*American Paper.*

A Good Bag

"*Disinsectisation* limited to persons who . . and *deratisation* if there is reason to suspect the presence of rats on board . . . a mosquito-proof dwelling in which the passengers can be accommodated or *hospitalized.*"—*Official Circular, India.*

A warrior in India, where the fight is fierce, sends me these horrible scalps:—

"Quininization"

"Quininizationing,"

and, believe it or not—

"REDEINFESTATION"!

"Maybe you have encountered something worth *reportaging.*"—*Business Letter.*

"This was two hours after he had *messaged* an urgent request that the department ask London to *message* the British Legation at Addis Ababa to send men and guns."—*American Paper.*

"The B.B.C. decided yesterday that the Amateur Hour which *debuted* on Tuesday is to stay put."—*London Paper.*

"William Freshman's courageous bid at play *debutting* 'Last of the Ladies' . . . is making progress."—*Same Paper.*

"THE WORLD'S GARDEN TOFFERY"
Advertisement.

EXERCISE

What is a toffery?
Three guesses.
Wrong every time.
A place where toffee is made.

"A Largs man who visited Rothesay to *spectate* at the recent putting competition . . ."—*Scottish Paper.*

". . . the great kitchen . . . which *services* the great restaurant."

". . . stimulate, soothe and *youthify.*"
A Woman's Magazine.

"We have made arrangements for the *encashment* of cheques."—*Bank Letter.*

"Captain —— is *up-graded* to G.S.O.2."
London Gazette.

"Dr. —— is *vacationing* with his daughter in the Panama Canal Zone."
Sunday Paper.

A. P. H.

Uncle Joe and Katsuzo Nishi

Not usually much concerned about his health, my Uncle Joe is nevertheless determined to live to an age as ripe as he can possibly make it. I must admit though that I was somewhat startled when he explained a bruise on the side of his forehead by saying that he had been trying to live to be a hundred-and-twenty.

"Why pick on a figure like that?" I asked in astonishment.

"I didn't pick it," he responded gloomily. And he showed me a newspaper cutting dated 30 . 11 . 36 which read thus: "Katsuzo Nishi, medical consultant to the Japanese Imperial family, now on a lecture tour in America, says: 'If you wish to live to be one hundred-and-twenty one rule to follow is—lie on your back and oscillate the whole body as a goldfish does.'"

I handed the cutting back respectfully and asked whether that was what he had been doing since the thirtieth of last November. No, he said; that was from a paper he had only recently found in a drawer; and besides, first of all he had had to find a goldfish, and that had been difficult.

"Difficult!"

"It was a question," explained Uncle Joe, "not so much of finding the goldfish as of studying it when found. I had to own one, so that I could watch it."

And the difficulty about owning one was that Aunt Susannah had always been down on people who owned goldfish: she wouldn't believe the goldfish could be made happy. "Those little bowls!" she would say in distress. Uncle Joe told me he wouldn't have dared to instal anything smaller than what he did in the end instal: an enormous aquarium-tank with great flat sides of plate-glass.

"All for one goldfish?" I asked.

He said one would have looked silly and Aunt Susannah would have thought it lonely: he had got four. "I had them in the bedroom—and there was another argument on that point, I can tell you. But they had to be where I could watch them oscillate. And I'm blowed if they would, the little blighters: not a quiver, so far as I could make out. There they were, *w-w-w—pff—pff*——"

Uncle Joe began to act the part of a goldfish, flapping his hands and assuming an expression at once fishlike and contemptuous, combining in one complicated performance the functions of actor and critic.

"*I* couldn't see," he said at length, desisting—"*I* couldn't see that the confounded creatures were doing anything capable of imitation by me. In the end I decided that the proper pace-makers must be a special sort, Japanese Oscillating Goldfish, bred to oscillate just as mice are bred to sing. That's the worst of these tiny compressed news-items. They're just there to catch your eye for a moment, not to tell you anything. So I gave up the idea of imitating a goldfish at first-hand and tried to *deduce* what sort of behaviour Katsuzo Nishi meant to recommend."

I suggested that, after all, there were clues. Undoubtedly, Uncle Joe said, undoubtedly: there were clues by means of which one could arrive at a possible course of action; but there was more than one answer. "Starting from scratch," he said, "what would you do?"

I began: "One or two goldfish of my acquain——"

"Never mind the goldfish," Uncle Joe interrupted testily. "I tell you I abandoned the goldfish. They were a broken reed. How do you interpret the instructions? That's the point."

"Well," I said, "it seems fairly simple. Lie on the back and oscillate the whole body——"

"Yes, yes, but what does that mean?"

I thought, and finally said, "What did you make of it?" After all, that was the point of the whole affair. Uncle Joe looked at me suspiciously, no doubt supposing (quite rightly) that I didn't want to risk giving my own idea. Then he said, Well, he had lain down on the floor and thought about the significance of the word "oscillate" in that position; and at last he had had a shot at putting it into practice.

"I sort of——" he began, and again finished the sentence by acting. Shaking himself about from side to side, he kept his eye on me to see whether I got the idea. I said I did.

I didn't mention the fact, but this performance was very strongly reminiscent of the goldfish-imitation he had given earlier. Perhaps in that minute he stumbled without knowing it on what Katsuzo Nishi meant.

Even so he wasn't satisfied that I realised what he was up to. He lowered himself gingerly to the floor and lay down on his back. "This is about what I tried to do," he said, and resumed his attempt at a literal interpretation of the command, "oscillate the whole body."

In the middle of this the door opened, missing his head by half-an-inch, and Aunt Susannah came in. Uncle Joe sprang to his feet.

"There," he said to me bitterly, "that's what happened before. Only last time she hit me."

Aunt Susannah apologised, but said she really didn't see how she was to expect to find people lying about on the floor just inside doors, and in weather like this too. Uncle Joe didn't attempt to justify himself. He merely said to me:

"Well, that was why I stopped trying to live to be a hundred-and-twenty. That, and the thought of doing the goldfish business when I was a hundred-and-nineteen. . . . I'll settle for ninety," he added, "or near offer." R. M.



"Excuse me, but aren't those the Old Digburian colours?"

Catering for the Lower Regions.

"According to our invaluable 'Who's Who in the Theatre,' he was born in 1818 and died in 1899. He later became an artificial limb maker."—*Wireless Paper.*



THE BRITISH CHARACTER

THE IMPORTANCE OF BREEDING

Bringing Out Father

"PLEASE need we go to the Mildewy-Maddows
Who live in a house which the Albert Hall shadows?
They will play very deep intellectual games
And no one will ever discover our names.
It wouldn't insult them, for they'll never know;
So I really don't see why we bother to go.
Let's sup by our fireside instead,
Oh, let's!
Let's sup by our fireside instead."

"My love, we *must* go to the Mildewy-Maddows
Who live in a house which the Albert Hall shadows.
They are giving a ball for their daughter in June,
And remember our Millicent's coming-out soon;
So we've got to be nice—and you mustn't be silly—
To people who might send an invite to Milly.
Get up from your fireside you must,
My pet!
Get up from your fireside you must!"

* * * * *

"Now, *why* did we go to the Mildewy-Maddows
Who live in a house which the Albert Hall shadows?
I spoke to a duchess who's well over eighty
And fed a jam-puff to your own sister Katie,
Then sat by myself for an hour-and-a-quarter;
Is this how I'm helping to launch my dear daughter?
I won't leave my fireside again,
Oh, no!
I won't leave my fireside again." J. G.

Over-Watchfulness

FROM very early years it is borne in upon us that if we run, and a strange dog sees us doing so, he will run too and very likely bite. And therefore we acquire caution.

I had forgotten about this until, quite recently, while being driven to the country, we came on a small motor-car with flames beneath and its flurried owner trying to beat out the fire with a mat. No one else was on the spot, and we had advanced (rather callously, I thought) some forty yards before it entered the brain of our chauffeur that he himself was the proud possessor of a patent extinguisher, and, stopping the car and extricating the instrument from the bonnet, he shouted out the glad news, and, all encumbered as he was by his overcoat, started to run, like a sprinter, to the scene of the disaster.

So far, although late, so good.

But when on his errand of mercy the scurrying chauffeur had approached within twenty yards of the burning car, at which the owner was still frantically flapping his mat, a large dog, which no one had previously noticed, suddenly came to life. Until then it must have been standing beside the hedge merely as a spectator, although possibly a slightly puzzled one since it was not the custom of cars to burst into flames at that part of the road; but when the chauffeur bearing the extinguisher bore down upon it at such a frenzied pace, the animal pulled itself together, remembered that it was a watchdog and began to be suspicious. Men who ran as fast as that were obviously guilty of something and must be dealt with. To entertain such views is chiefly the purpose of watchdogs—probably it had indeed been indulged in them—and it therefore sprang at the running chauffeur, seized his flying tails, and held him up.

We still continue to make munitions marked by deadly ingenuity; but about a savage dog there is something far more frightening. This chauffeur, I was told, had been among bullets and shells, bombs and gas, in the War and had won through; but nothing could exceed his alarm as the dog snarled and leapt and showed its wicked teeth.

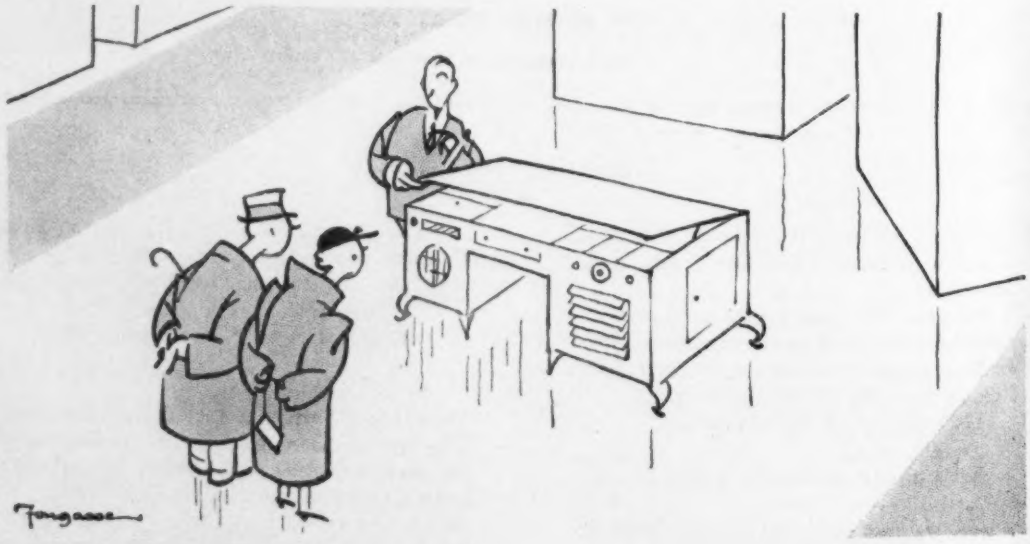
The result was the most deplorable checkmate. Relief for the car was close at hand—only twenty yards distant—but it could not be applied because a dog was doing its duty, mistakenly, of course, but pardonably, and was being properly doubtful of the intentions of a man who had been running too fast—or even perhaps had been running at all.

The flames increased; the owner with the mat applied his energies more and more feverishly; no other help was forthcoming; and all the while the chauffeur, dancing about in terror, was attempting to placate a persecutor that every moment was more pleased with its exemplary behaviour. "Good dog! Good dog!" I could hear the chauffeur saying. "Down, Towzer!" "Down, Fido!" "Nice fellow, then!" But the dog knew better. People who run must be checked if not actually assaulted.

At last, in despair, the chauffeur cried to the car-owner: "Come and get it!" and flung the extinguisher to him, and the owner dropped his mat to fetch it. But before the passenger could pick it up, this indefatigable, insatiable sentinel, packed with virtuous feelings, transferred its attentions to him, and with a spring prevented him not only from using the extinguisher but even getting near it.

All this we could see through the back-window of our car: from the inside, because, for one thing, as I forgot to say, it was raining hard, and for another there seemed to be no point in useless observers adding to the scene. Anyway, I cannot recall ever feeling so incapable.

It was then suddenly, not soon enough but not too late, that I remembered a box of snuff bestowed recently upon me by a benevolent *maître d'hôtel* who wished me to use it as a preventative of influenza, and I remembered at the same time a story by Dr. JOHN BROWN about a dog-fight and the best means of ending it. I am far from being a brave man, but



"THIS IS OUR LATEST NOVELTY—A WRITING-DESK THAT TURNS OUT TO BE A WIRELESS-SET."
"THERE 'S NOTHING MUCH NEW IN THAT."
"AH, BUT THIS IS A WRITING-DESK THAT TURNS OUT TO BE A WIRELESS-SET THAT TURNS OUT TO BE A COCKTAIL-CABINET THAT TURNS OUT TO BE A WRITING-DESK AFTER ALL."



"JUST CLEAN THE INSIDE OF THE WINDOW, MARY, SO THAT I CAN SEE OUT, BUT LEAVE THE OUTSIDE SO THAT THE SMITHS CAN'T SEE IN."

commending my soul to Heaven, I took the box from my pocket, made the best speed I could to the fray, opened the box and flung its contents into the creature's face. It was both war and magnificence! The dog spluttered and sneezed and strangled and coughed and—cowered away; while, still with caution mingled with our relief, we prepared to advance upon the burning car.

The heroic deed was, however (as often) wasted, for in the interim another car had arrived, and the driver, extracting his own extinguisher, had in a few seconds put the fire out—all so naturally as to make us think that this kind of assistance was a part of his daily routine.

In the lull that followed, everyone being at last in the stationary condition which even watchdogs that have not been snuffed-out approve, the chauffeur recovered his unused extinguisher, regained our car and continued his journey. The road was empty again; the dog was probably doctoring itself in the nearest pond; order was restored.

If this little story deserves the addition of a moral, I should say that there are three. One is that watch-dogs should be kept on chains; another, that every car should carry its own means of extinguishing flames; and the third is, do not be without a box of snuff. E. V. L.

Note on Fiction Editors

By an Envious Short-Story Writer

IT must be easy choosing short stories for newspapers and magazines nowadays. Even if there is no good English work—can the adjective be applied to English work?—there is always something worth while from America. So why bother about English stuff anyway? Some fiction editors hardly ever do.

Of course American stories mean extra work and trouble for the fiction editor—altering "color" to "colour," "thru" to "through" and the like. But those fellows are devils for work—never spare themselves.

Why, some of them, when feeling particularly energetic, will go to the trouble of translating the story to an English atmosphere. This is highly-skilled work, involving the alteration of the words "Manhattan" or "New York" to "London," "Bowery" to "Poplar," and "The Hudson" to "The Thames," not forgetting to convert all $ signs into £s.

When all this has been done you have what the reader will consider to be a really English story, beginning—

> "I couldn't meet up with Mamie that night on account of I got a date with the downtown boys to shoot craps up at Murphy's, so the dame gets sore on me and gives me the air."

When he can buy material like that, and at syndication rates too, what fiction editor is going to pay good money for stories written in dull old plebeian English.

One point I've noticed which strikes me as regrettable is that notes I get back from editors with my stories are still couched in the old-fashioned sort of English which is fast disappearing from the short-story pages of our more progressive publications. Stuff like "The Editor regrets he is unable to make use of your contribution . . ."

Why not "That was a helluva punk story you sent us, pal. Why don't you get wised up to writing real American like this?"

"The Decent Thing"

"WHAT, if it isn't a rude answer," said Parrot wittily, "is the matter with our Mess Secretary?"

Everyone looked at Lieutenant Finch, who was sitting over in a corner by himself. In front of him was an account-book, and his lips were moving rapidly.

"If you want us to be personal——" began Captain Crabbe.

"Oh, no. After all, we're used to his looks. But he's been grinding away in that corner since about seven, and every now and then he moans. Not that I'd say anything, mind you, but it rather worries me."

"He's falsifying the balance-sheet," said Crabbe uncharitably. "It's a monthly proceeding. He works out how much methylated spirit he put in the whisky and then takes an average——"

"Can't you lot be quiet?" said Finch peevishly. "I'm trying to balance last month's accounts. It's all very well if you've got nothing to do but sit swilling beer like a troop of guzzling swine, but I'm *working*."

There was a hurt silence.

"Doing *what* did he say?" asked Parrot.

"Swilling beer," said Crabbe, noting with satisfaction that Parrot was the only one with beer. "Like a troop of guzzling swine, he said. He meant 'herd.'"

"Drove," corrected Lieutenant Pullet abstractedly. Pullet was busy playing a thrilling game of draughts against himself.

"That's a nasty thing to say, Finch," said Parrot reprovingly. "When a man has to descend to sordid vituperation just because——"

"Oh, *do* be quiet," implored Finch. "I'm in a fearful mess. As a matter of fact I seem to be about six pounds down over this last month."

Parrot eyed him with amazement. "Six pounds down!" he said in shocked tones. "You doctor the whisky, you water the beer, and now you've swindled us out of six pounds!"

"You realise what this means?" said Crabbe solemnly. "It means disgrace. You'll have to be publicly degraded."

"Golly!" said Parrot, entranced with the idea. "I can see it all now: the grey square at dawn, the melancholy tap of the drum as the Colonel tears off your shoulder-straps and snaps your sword over his knee——"

"Finch always borrows *my* sword," Crabbe reminded him.

"Then the Colonel can snap it over *your* knee," conceded Parrot generously. "The cries and groans of the weeping troops as you are marched off, a broken man——"

". . . and fivepence makes one-and-three," mumbled Finch in his corner.

"And then the lonely party by the graveside——"

"Square Four," put in Crabbe.

"The volley——" Here Parrot broke off, evidently overcome by emotion.

"The disgrace of it," said Crabbe. "We can't let him go through with it. Think of the regiment!"

"Nor we can," said Parrot. "We'll have to ask him to do the decent thing. We leave him alone with a revolver, don't we?"

"Messy," commented Crabbe. "Head in a gas-oven is not so dignified but it's more comfortable."

"What about falling on his sword?"

suggested Pullet, huffing his left hand and giving his right a king.

"*My* sword," corrected Crabbe again.

"It's so hard to fall straight," said Parrot. "Personally I'm all for opening veins in a warm bath; it has always appealed to me. A nice warm bath, mind you, with plenty of smelly bath-salts and a celluloid duck to play with; and of course a loofah."

"What an ass I am!" said Finch suddenly with relief. "I'd clean forgotten. It's a cheque of yours, Parrot, for six pounds odd. It came back 'R.D.' at the beginning of the month, and it's been throwing all the accounts out."

"What!" cried Parrot.

"Too bad," remarked Crabbe sadly, shaking his head.

"You realise what *that* means!" said Pullet.

"The disgrace," sighed Crabbe. "The grey square at dawn——"

"The low hound!" exclaimed Parrot indignantly. "He said I could have up to ten pounds over my balance without question, and then he refuses a measly fiver!"

"Unfortunate, of course," said Finch, emerging from the corner; "but you know what the regulations are and how strict they are about that sort of thing. Of course you *could* just resign your commission, but we expect you to do the decent thing."

"Naturally," said Crabbe.

"Poor old Parrot!" said Pullet.

"And one so young too," said Finch.

They retired from the Mess with all the orderly gloom of undertakers' men.

"Sorry to disturb you, old boy," said Finch, coming back a moment later to where Parrot was concocting a violently abusive letter to his bank manager, "but I just thought you might want this."

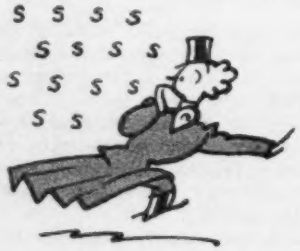
It was a large and antiquated horse-pistol from one of the racks in the ante-room. He laid it reverently on the table by Parrot's side, shook his hand emotionally and left him to it.

To Finish the Season



GAFFE

My sister (if one can belelvoir)
Created surprise with the Belvoir;
She thought one was bound
To furnish a hound,
And had taken her big black retrelvoir!



SOLECISM

They're a disciplined lot are the Bicester,
And the Huntsman is always called "Micester";
When a girl from the Fernie
Addressed him as "Ernie,"
They all gathered round her and hicester.

On, Alfred, On!

"He told the story (also illustrated) of the Kinsale Sisters at the Crimean War, and their meeting with Florence Nightingale, and of their nursing the wounded soldiers at the Battle of Balaclava—the subject of Tennyson's famous charge."

Irish Local Paper.

An Interesting Suggestion

"Sir,—As under present circumstances there is no hope of a bridge being constructed for some time, I would suggest that the advisability of building a tunnel, rather than a tunnel would probably be cut out of the solid bridge, should be considered."

Letter to Scots Paper.

Lost

LATELY I have become quite a popular figure at the Lost Property Office at Baker Street Station, owing to the fact that every Saturday during the winter I have gone with my friend Pokewhistle to play tennis on some hard-courts which can only be reached by a 61 tram. So about every other Tuesday I stroll into the office and the man behind the counter greets me with the smile he reserves for regular customers.

"I left a tennis-racket on a 61 tram on Saturday," I say quietly.

"What time?" asks the man.

"About 5.30," I reply.

"What make of racket?" he says.

"A Lozenger Super-Demon," I tell him. Of course he knows all the answers before I give them, but these myrmidons are not allowed to cut short the ritual.

He disappears for a couple of minutes and then returns with the racket and asks me how much it is worth, because I must pay half-a-crown in the pound.

"About thirty shillings," I say, and hand over the three-and-ninepence, bid him *Au revoir* and pass out into the night. Once or twice I have suggested that I might be allowed a "series discount," but he tells me that this is impossible unless a long-term contract is signed in advance.

Pokewhistle, who is one of those unnatural creatures who never lose anything, is very sarcastic about my slack-mindedness, as he calls it. "I can't understand how you do it," he says. "If you had a well-regulated mind you would simply say to yourself as you climbed up the stairs of the tram, 'I have with me a racket, which I must not forget to put under my arm when I arrive at my destination.' Your subconscious mind would immediately make a note of the fact, and at the journey's end would whisper warningly, 'Sympson, your racket!'"

I have tried this method, but unfortunately my subconscious mind has no idea of time, and usually waits until I get home before doing his stuff.

Last Tuesday, however, I was astonished to meet Pokewhistle at my usual counter. When he saw me he gave a false laugh.

"I've just popped in to get my wife's umbrella," he said. "She's frightfully prodigal with umbrellas, scattering them all over the Metropolis with careless abandon." Then he turned to the man and said, "I have come for a green umbrella with an—er—ivory handle, left on a 42 bus last Thursday at 8 P.M."



"I—SAID—CAN—YOU—SELL—US—A—PARROT!"

"And I've come for a tennis-racket left on a 61 tram on Saturday about 5.30," I said—"a Lozenger Super-Demon valued at thirty shillings."

The man vanished, and Pokewhistle chatted about the weather and asked me where I was going for August and said that really one wondered what MUSSOLINI would say next. Then the man came back with a tennis-racket.

"I'm afraid I can't find any trace of your umbrella," he said to Pokewhistle. "Are you quite sure it was a 42 bus and that you have the time right?"

"I'll ask my wife again when I get home," said Pokewhistle, and the attendant handed me the tennis-racket.

"But this isn't my Lozenger Super-Demon," I said. "It is an Oxygen Smasher." I looked at Pokewhistle and he wilted.

Pokewhistle always comes part of the way with me on the tram, and it was quite obvious what had happened. He might have bluffed it out, but when the attendant also produced a detective novel, a bag of balls and a pair of shoes, also the property of Pokewhistle, he saw that the game was up. I'm afraid my Lozenger Super-Demon has gone for good this time, but it was worth it.



"Oh, well, p'raps—just a dry martini."

The Britisch Empire

Typical conversations for nordic students of britisch ways and means

V.—The Battle-Caper

Hon. Biggs. This fine morning, near Johannesburg, you shall take part in seeing the aboriginals absorbed in capering all over the place, with threats. The War-trot.

Lord Smith. What is the wherefore for such a preoccupation?

Hon. Biggs. It is by way of an earnest of their intent to do mischiefs to neighbouring tribals.

Viscount Brown. Gracious, I tell you, my good chap! Would it not be the correct action of those who place a value on their own skins to eschew contact with such such who subscribe to primitive notions of Rightful and Rongful.

Lord Robinson. You see, it is possible to conjecture that the aboriginals might be afflikted with feelings of dismay against the by-lookers, be they even the Best People, and let fli with their darts.

Hon. Biggs. Ho Ho! You amuse. What with your hesitanci, a Kolonial is in a position to give you the laugh-over!

Lord Smith (*to* Viscount Brown). When we came onto the Empire, little were we to know, if at all, that Kolonial Society would dub us as laughing matters! I have taken offence.

Viscount Brown (*to* Lord Robinson). Milord Smith has taken offence at the rude-and-readi attitudinals of this joungster. I am with him there. I will say, Will you join us?

Lord Robinson. With no doubt in the world! He should regard our statuses.

The Milords. Hon. the Peter Biggs, may we beg to let you know that we have not come onto the Empire to suffer a jeering!

Lord Smith. Take that to heart!

Viscount Brown. Smoke it!

Lord Robinson. Permit our rebukals to sink in!

Hon. Biggs. O dear! O really! Now then! Fanci! I protest, no offences intended, none meant. Forget my words; least spoken, shortly repaired! You see, what I mean, there is no need to raise alarms, for we here are in the know about the War-trot. It is all done, nowadays, to entertain and danger is not present. Therefore it would be odd to be timid. Vorgive me!

[*All, rekonciliatori, go to the War-trot.*

Lord Smith. Mi! See what behaving!

Viscount Brown. How they shuffle!

Lord Robinson. Hither, thither and roundaways!

Lord Smith. And what for a dizzel of plumes and adornals!

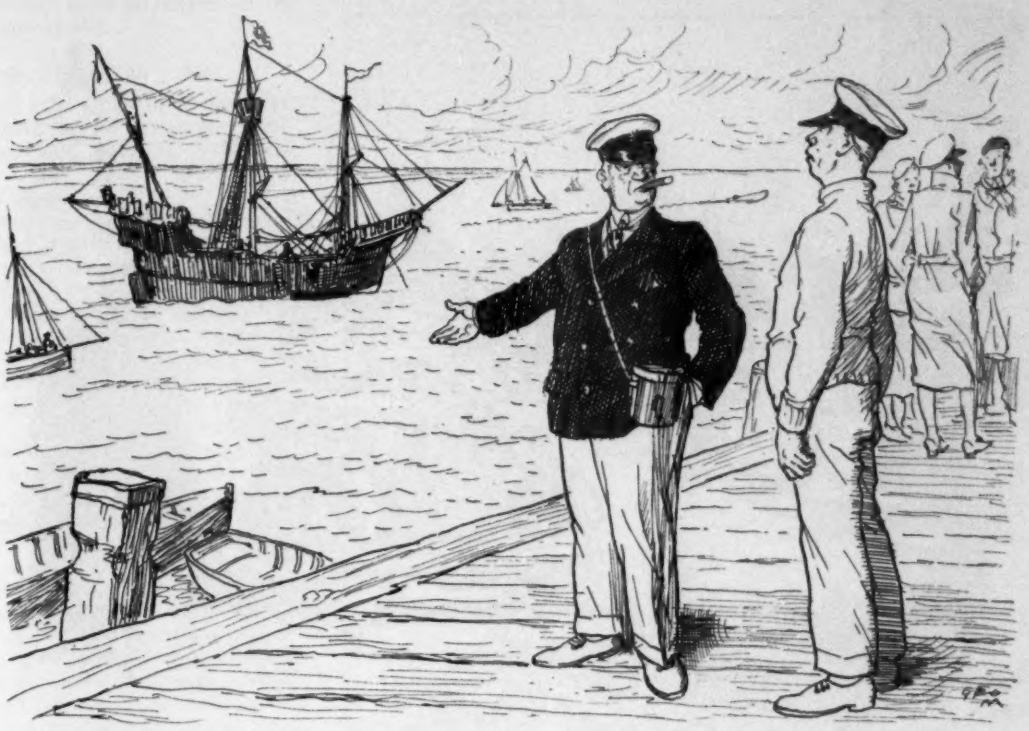
Viscount Brown. They brandisch. Glance, if you will, for a moment, at the big darts! They are well beweaponed.

Hon. Biggs. After the displayal we shall attend a before-the-lunchtime coqu-tail fling, given by my personal croni, Hon. the Henry Johnson.

All. Aha! Aha!



THE NON-CO-OPERATOR



"I BOUGHT IT FROM THE METRO-GAUMONT, BUT I DON'T UNDERSTAND THE RIG, SO I'VE INSTALLED AN AUXILIARY MOTOR."

The Foodspoiler's Guide;

Being a few notes on the preparation of food and the elimination of nourishment in English homes.

"The food was plain but bad. . . ."
Letter from England.

General Instructions to Cook

Your natural dislike for the satisfactory preparation of food makes it important that your surroundings while at work should be attractive. When the time for preparing a meal draws near, invite your friends into the kitchen, hold a party if possible, turn on the radio and create as much distraction as you can. Then, having placed the cat out of harm's way on the kitchen-table, begin.

In the short space available the writer proposes to run through such tasks as, in an ordinary English household, you are likely to be called upon to perform in a normal day's work. Elaboration of the subject must be left to a later opportunity.

1.—Soups

All are made in much the same way. The liquid should be boiled up at the last moment and rushed to the dining-room on cold plates. Soups may be classed under four headings:—

(*a*) *Crème* (do not confuse with Cream). The chief ingredients of this are water, potatoes, flour, rice, starch, etc.

(*b*) *Strong* (Brown or Green).

(*c*) *Weak*.

(*d*) *Yellow*.

In making (*b*), (*c*) and (*d*), merely empty the tins and add water until the required colour is attained. Drops of oil should never be removed from the surface of soup.

2.—Fish

There are many sorts of fish to work on, but they must not be too fresh. White fish is best when bought slightly brown. Sole, plaice, etc., should be soft and "mothery" to the touch.

Fish should always be boiled, but it is possible that the fried description may be demanded if you are in a new place. This will cause you much extra work, and the habit should be discouraged. Proceed, therefore, as follows:—

Rub your fish into a previously prepared mixture of breadcrumbs, gelatine, flour, water, and, if necessary, a little rosin (to bind the whole). Place in pan and allow to sizzle. Do not let it explode. Dust lightly with sand and serve with a disarming smile.

You will find that the family asks for boiled fish in future and this particular form of trouble has become a thing of the past.

(*a*) *Herrings*. Remove the roes and give to cat. Boil and serve in half-an-inch of water (as if still swimming).

(*b*) *Haddock*. Simmer until nearly grey. Add a little milk-powder to the water and serve. It is permissible to place two eggs, fried hard and previously left to cool, upon the top. The haddock is accustomed to them and they give the dish an almost human appearance.

(*c*) *Kedgeree and Fish-Pie*. These dreadful dishes are comparatively easy



"I FORGET THE NAME, BUT IT'S A TEA-HOUSE WITH A THATCHED ROOF."

to make, but from the point of view of the cat are sheer robbery and should be discouraged. Proceed as for Shepherd's Pie (*see* below), but use remains of fish instead of remains of meat. Only the largest bones need be removed.

3.—Eggs

The simplest thing to do to an egg is to boil it. Proceed as follows:—

Push thumb and index finger through the shell, place hurriedly in boiling water and forget. As it is essential that eggs should achieve the consistency of cannon-balls, it is advisable to have a temporary black-out or a period of amusing occupation elsewhere. It is hoped that your party in the kitchen will be sufficiently entertaining to provide this. It must be remembered that it is not easy to ruin the food-value of eggs entirely. Some cooks prefer to boil their eggs overnight and reheat in the morning, and we have nothing against this plan.

4.—Meat

(*a*) *Roast Beef.* Bake in a fast oven until nearly black. Carefully remove all natural juices from time to time and keep them aside. Your friends and yourself will like them. Remove charred mass from oven and add about a pint of artificial gravy. Serve lukewarm. You should find that the natural blue colour of the interior has been preserved and everyone will compliment you.

(*b*) *Mutton.* Proceed as for Beef above, but take care that your oven is faster still. Mutton should be burnt outside, but below the surface it should still be quite red.

5.—Vegetables and Fruit

The only vegetables that require careful attention are cabbage and Brussels-sprouts. These should be put in a saucepan after breakfast and allowed to boil all day until the aroma becomes unbearable, the household is driven into the garden, and the cat is gassed. The cabbage's work may then be said to be done, and it should be allowed to cool off in the open air.

Potatoes can also be boiled indefinitely, and, though more liable to disintegrate, do not call attention to themselves in the same manner and can always become soup (*Crème*).

Apart from this there is fortunately nothing that a cook need worry about nowadays with these tiresome articles of diet. Care most be taken, however, in opening the tins and against overheating the contents. If vegetables are still hot when ready for the dining-room, water must be added until the whole is lukewarm and thoroughly sodden.

In the case of fruit the natural juice should in the same way be diluted before serving. Tinned or synthetic cream thickened with flour may be added when there are parties or important guests in the house.

6.—Birds

(*a*) *Duck.* Take a partially-plucked duck and hack it into irregular pieces (for ducks cannot be carved), soak in brown gravy and stew, adding water as required. Place in dish when saturation-point has been reached, sprinkle with tinned peas and serve. An apple squashed in water and pounded to pulp in a mortar is considered to add distinction to this popular course, but you must be careful not to remove skin or core.

For other birds we unfortunately

have no space, apart from emphasising that they must be cooked on the day of their death.

7.—Shepherd's Pie

We will take a little more space for the preparation of this homely old-fashioned dish, for your work will occasion much interest and amusement to your friends in the kitchen and further give you opportunities for providing a charming element of surprise in the dining-room. We will deal first with the crust that conceals the interior mixture. For this take all old potato leavings and mash thoroughly with flour and water (a little plaster from where the wall-surface cracked last Wednesday makes an excellent cement). Now for the interior. Let us say first of all you must not go too far; the writer has known cases where success has been achieved by the insertion of tram-tickets, hairpins and so forth, but these extreme measures cannot generally be recommended. Take any old meat and cut it into irregular lumps. Previously-discarded rissoles are an excellent groundwork for your pie and save much exercise. Remove the outer husk of a Spanish onion, cut into thin strips and dig the pieces well in. Stir the whole until clammy. Place in a dish and clamp your previously-prepared lid on the whole. As soon as warm, remove from the fire and burn the edge of the crust with a taper to relieve the dead whiteness of its surface. Place a sprig of parsley, like a wreath, in the middle of the pie, turn off the radio as a mark of respect, and serve slowly.

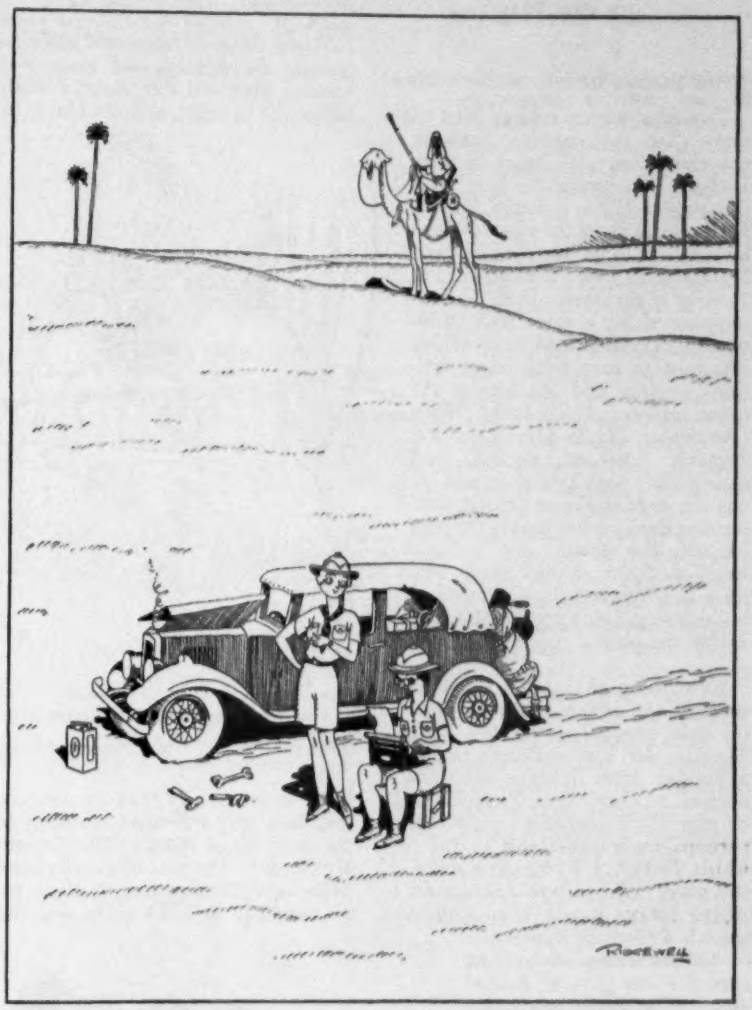
8.—Savouries

Should you be called upon to provide a savoury, we give three useful examples:—

(*a*) *Macaroni au Gratin.* Take each length and blow through it smartly to remove obstructions. Allow two feet to each person. Boil, and serve quite unflavoured.

(*b*) Take a prune and wrap it in a piece of fat bacon from which the rind should be partially removed. Steam this for five minutes. Give time for the water to soak into a piece of bread below, and serve.

(*c*) *Welsh Rarebit.* Give cat to friends to hold. Take any olde Englishe cheese and remove silver paper; heat suddenly in a pan (catching it unawares) and add water and milk-powder. Stir, and pour on to striped toast (*see* below). Rush savoury out of kitchen quickly. Release cat, and switch radio over to Luxembourg.



"You've finished that chapter, 'Lost in the Desert,' Miss Parkin? Right! Then we'll start on the next one—'The Dawn of Romance.'"

9.—Sundries

(*a*) *Toast.* Choose a stale loaf and cut irregular pieces from it with a greasy knife. Press these against the bars of an electric-stove until the bread is branded and the appearance of the back of a zebra is attained. Place in a damp plate on the table at least one hour before required.

(*b*) *Mint Sauce.* Chop the watercress finely, removing the larger stalks, and serve in diluted vinegar. Add a dash of mint to give the necessary false impression.

(*c*) *Coffee.* Coffee has the great advantage that it can be reboiled and served several times. Save your coffee therefore. Old coffee can always be revivified and made appetising by the addition of bottled coffee extract obtainable from any grocer. In no case should coffee be ground in the house.

Your day's work should now be accomplished, and you can join your friends in a round game.

Quick Work

"Mr. Peters, son of Mr. Bernard Peters, was educated at Plumtree on Wednesday, after a short but very pleasant Rhodesian holiday."
Rhodesian Paper.

"Owing to the Budget, Mr. and Mrs. Chamberlain will only be able to take a short holiday."—*Daily Telegraph.*

Same here.

At the Play

"THE TAMING OF THE SHREW' (NEW)

THE *Slys*, we are told on high authority, "are no rogues. Look in the chronicles. We came in with Richard Conqueror." But this *Christopher Sly* is a rogue indeed, for he steals away the play of which he is meant to be but a small part. It has always been a weakness of *The Taming of the Shrew* that the kidnapping of *Sly* creates such an interesting position that we are rather reluctant to turn to the more artificial wooings and matings of the upper classes in North Italy. When *Christopher Sly* is played by Mr. ARTHUR SINCLAIR, nodding and gazing like a sage Irishman, and becoming more and more preoccupied, until he finally takes part in the play himself, the scales are unfairly weighed down against those who have to play the splendidly-decked but not so genuine parts in the play within the play.

Everything that could be done to right the scales has been done in this production at the New Theatre. Mr. LESLIE BANKS, taking a holiday from being a deep abnormal modern, acts *Petruchio* with a gay devil-may-care gusto that perhaps owes something to the film which DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS made of this play. When so great an actress as EDITH EVANS comes on as *Katharina* there is a resulting impression of talents being allowed to rust, for the part of *Katharina* gives little scope for great gifts. It falls into two halves: a first period of crude tantrums and a second period of crude docility. This *Katharina* at any rate leaves the feeling that the end is not yet, and that the docility itself will prove later on to have been but a whim of the moment or a plot. Mr. GEORGE HOWE as *Baptista* is a little too reasonable and genial for the paternal pigheadedness, which is so essential to the plot, to appear in character. *Lucentio* is played by Mr. ALEC CLUNES. It is not many weeks since Mr. CLUNES made such an excellent young hero in *The Road to Ruin*, and here he is again, overreaching the older generation with a frank good-nature that ensures that everything will come right for him in the end.

These alliances between families of wealth are lightly and gaily contracted, provided the financial settlements are in order, and the shrew has



A GLIMPSE OF HIGH LIFE

Christopher Sly . . . MR. ARTHUR SINCLAIR

to be tamed merely that the course of true love may run more smoothly for the easily-loved *Bianca* (Miss ELSPETH DUXBURY). The note of comedy needs little strengthening among these gay players, but to make quite sure that



GETTING ACQUAINTED

Katharina . . . . . MISS EDITH EVANS
Petruchio . . . . . MR. LESLIE BANKS

Sly and the rest of us shall see a show worth seeing the character *Horse* appears in the programme, and, opposite, the names of two actors, J. SPROLL and RICHARD BEAMISH, for this is a horse only a little more dignified than he would be if asked to pull his weight in Christmas pantomime. But for all the splendour of the Italian pageant it does not alleviate our insistent anxiety about what is going to happen to poor *Sly*, and when he is redeposited in the mud and wakes again resolving, like the true philosopher he is, to be glad at any rate of a memorable dream, we are left regretting that we have not seen more of so human and entertaining a man. Mr. ARTHUR SINCLAIR, who has had many greater parts, has a memorable if minor triumph here. D. W.

At the Music-Hall

"GLAMOUR AND LAUGHTER" (VICTORIA PALACE)

GLAMOUR is difficult stuff to measure, and I am not even sure that I know it when I see it; but laughter is a more straightforward commodity, and of that this programme stirred plenty. It was a distinct improvement on one which I saw here a couple of months ago, and it included two notably good turns. Both of them were new to me.

First I put Mr. FRED SANBORN, for he has about him a lunatic originality which would tempt me to apply the word genius if it had not long ago been rendered meaningless by over-use. He is a comedian of strong MARXist tendencies. Like GROUCHO'S, his face is shadowed by ponderous eyebrows, which lend immense significance to his actions; like CHICO and HARPO, he is a brilliant musician; and like HARPO, he is silent, except for an occasional whisper scarcely audible but fully conveyed by his remarkably expressive face. His jacket is rather longer than the fashion, his trousers considerably shorter, his small figure is crowned by a battered bowler-hat, and his bland innocence of manner is belied by much impish cunning lurking in his eye.

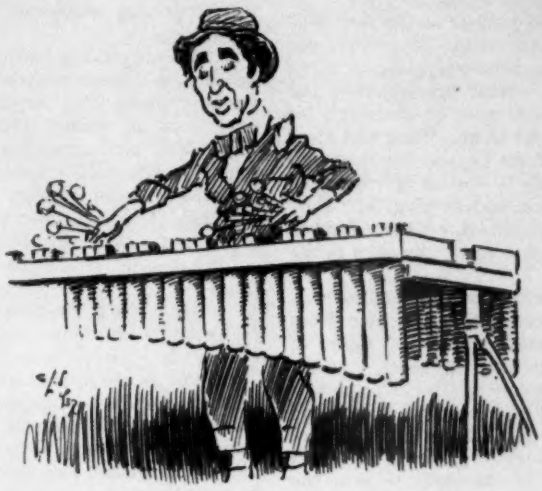
He played a large xylophone (which his companion inexplicably referred to as a

zither) so well that one could have wished for a performance less interrupted by feigned inability to follow a score and by the frequent extraction of marshmallows from the instrument; but comedy enters into his art as much as music, and his quips, idiotically simple in themselves, are invested by his personality with a subtle and individual humour.

Next to him I put THE JOANNYS, a pair whose senior partner flips his fingers about before a small searchlight and so casts shadows on to a screen. As this is slung from the flies and slightly above him, the audience is able to watch his fingers as well as their ingenious creations.

After he had been on for a few minutes I felt confident that no subject could defeat him. The Zoo usually appeals to shadow-throwers, and he sent a brace of lifelike monkeys not only chattering over the screen but chasing each other madly round the roof of the theatre. His giraffes were also good; but more ambitious and very effective was quite a long bull-fighting episode in which, after a ferocious encounter, man and beast suddenly observed the absurdity of it all and made handsome amends, the matador smoothing the bull's forelock and the bull affectionately licking the matador's sword. A Spanish background, too intact to be any longer accurate, was first thrown on to the screen in colour by a separate projector. Good, too, was an animated cartoon of a dark gentleman, whom I took to be a Congress agitator, delivering from a kind of howdah an impassioned harangue, presumably on the iniquitous powers of Provincial Governors.

In support there were a number of sound performances. One of the KANE OHAYO TRIO of Japanese gymnasts step-danced while balanced on his hands, and another was a master of the enviable trick of walking up a pair of ten-foot bamboo poles, using them as stilts; Mr. COOKIE BOWERS is a noise-imitator from Hollywood's cartoon studios, and after reproducing a whole farmyard so perfectly that I felt he should be bought in by the Government and installed in Whitehall to lend a semblance of realism to the urban labours of the Ministry of Agriculture, he gave a series of amusing impersonations, the best of which was that of an excitable lady in a swimming-pool; Miss SHIRLEY RICHARDS danced neatly, and there was a keen edge on the banjo-work of her partner, Mr. BOB GILLETTE; and Mr. LEE SIMS wooed syncopated sounds skilfully from a



MR. FRED SANBORN AND CO.

grand piano. He and Miss ILOMAY BAILEY were billed as "America's Greatest Musical Team," but as Miss BAILEY sang into a microphone and I



THE ANIMALS CAME OUT ONE BY ONE

MR. COOKIE BOWERS

was sitting in the front stalls, which this pernicious appliance robs of intelligible sound, I had no means of judging the merits of such a sweeping claim.

ERIC.

My London Garden

March 22nd.—Two days ago entered spare-room to find bowl of crocuses, planted last September, in pieces on floor, and caretaker's cat asleep on bed. A bitter blow, but cruel to punish cat, which, after all, is also Nature's handiwork. Hyacinths over at last. A single daffodil blooming amidst profusion of leaves.

Have picked the daffodil in spare-room, removed all bowls to kitchen, emptied, washed and put them away. With the three new bowls bought this year from Peabody, in addition to the two bowls unbroken by the caretaker's cat, shall be able to have a really good display of home-grown bulbs next spring. Peabody says that he will have fibre and great variety of bulbs from end of August onwards. Shall make a point of filling bowls in September, because buying from Peabody in the spring bowls of bulbs in flower is not the same thing as growing one's own bulbs. The interest and pleasure derived from watching their growth is really amazing.

Mrs. Carruthers (on the ground-floor) tells me that she has recently seen Peabody driving an expensive-looking car. Peabody deserves to get on. Peabody thoroughly understands Nature.

"Lingua Franca"

To me Finance is always most obscure,
And what it is in France nobody knows,
But *"plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose,"*
And the higher the franc gets, so they say, the fewer.

Things That Might Have Been Better Expressed.

"Mr. —— is also being married soon, but his ambitions lie elsewhere."
Yorkshire Paper.

"She wore a black dress with a white front to-day and she wrinkled up her face in a mischievous smile as her daughter pinned a rose upon it so she would look nice for the picture."—*Canadian Paper.*

On second thoughts, perhaps that wasn't a smile?

Rhapsody on Rubbish

"OUR refuse-tipping system," said the Town Clerk of Dudley recently in an interview with a *Sunday Express* reporter, "is now a model for the country. A man came from Shanghai only the other week to see it."

That is a proud boast, and all honour to the men who made it possible. These men had vision. They were not content, as other corporations are, to stagnate, to shrug their shoulders and say with casual finality that the methods of rubbish-disposal which were good enough for their fathers were good enough for them. They had ideas about refuse-tipping which went far beyond the commonplace conception of it as simply a matter of conveying the refuse to some suitable spot and tipping it. They elevated refuse-tipping into a science, an art even—and in the result their system became most justly the envy of the modern world.

But if the refuse-tippers of Dudley call for, and receive, the highest praise for solid worth, it is the man from Shanghai who fires the imagination. He is a figure of genuine romance. Men have crossed the seven seas for love before now, braved precipice and avalanche in pursuit of some rare and retiring plant, and hacked a way through virgin forests to find forgotten races. Jason took a deal of trouble to get the Golden Fleece, and the Queen of the South came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of SOLOMON. But there is a simple grandeur about a journey from Shanghai to see the dust-carts being emptied in Dudley that takes the breath away.

The Man from Shanghai has been so much in my thoughts of late that he will forgive me if the mental picture I have formed of him is inaccurate in any detail. Obviously the probabilities are that he is a Chinaman (or more likely Japanese); but I cannot see him as a Wong Ho or a Matsu Hari. To me his name is Saunders, or Corcoran, and he is British to the backbone. On the small side and fair-haired, with a slight sandy moustache, he has a thoughtful, earnest face which reveals him at once for what he is, a first-rate sanitary officer. All his life he has spent in a struggle to bring the blessings of modern sanitation to Shanghai, and in large measure he has succeeded. He has installed great sewers, he has laid on much excellent water, he has cleared rats out of warehouses and bats out of belfries. Only in the matter of rubbish-disposal has he fallen short. And to that problem he has for months now been bending his massive and hygienic mind.



Teacher at the Institute. "LISTEN, ALL. WHETHER OUR WORK THIS TERM BE STENCILLING, BARBOLA, LEATHER-WORK OR LINO-CUTS, WE MUST AVOID ANYTHING 'ARTY CRAFTY.'"

Failure to reach any satisfactory solution has brought him to the very verge of despair, when a chance conversation with a visiting dustman from Foochow rekindles the flame of hope. The dustman is vague, but for what it's worth he can tell Mr. Saunders, or Corcoran, that there's only one topic in refuse-tipping circles down South, and that topic is—Dudley. He doesn't know, mind you, but he gathers it's something *absolutely new*. Revolutionary, as you might say.

A nod is as good as a wink to a sanitary officer. Saunders loses no time, it is reasonable to suppose, in laying the whole position before the Corporation. Few will contend, he urges, that the present system of throwing old tins into the Town Hall and scattering ashes and other more friable refuse on the public highways is satisfactory. Shanghai deserves something better than this; more, she deserves the best. "End the bad old days of casual tipping," he cries, "and give us the Dudley System."

"What *is* the Dudley System?" asks the Great Panjandrum.

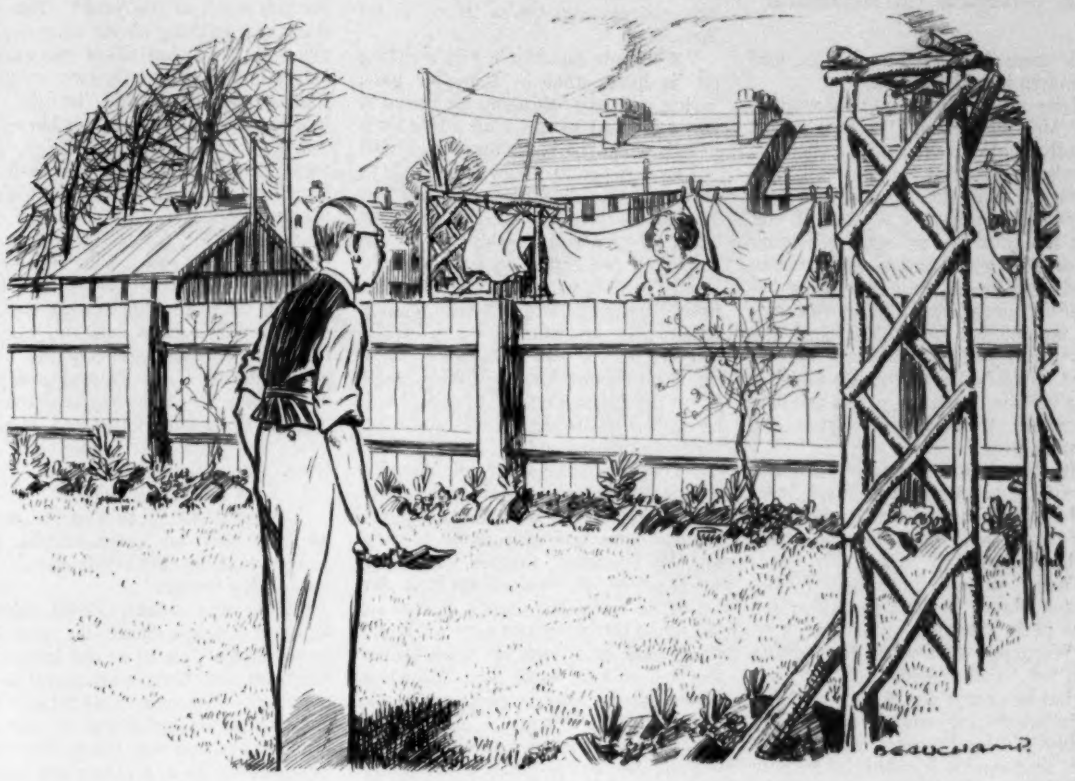
"I don't know," replies Saunders (Corcoran?), "but I am going to Dudley to find out."

There is a certain amount of hubbub, I think, at this suggestion, some applauding its boldness, others decrying it on the ground of expense, while a few of the baser sort do not scruple to insinuate that the sanitary officer's real purpose is to witness the Coronation. But Saunders soon silences his critics. In a speech of great power and sincerity he asseverates his single-minded devotion to the cause of Shanghai sanitation. He recounts the long list of his achievements in the honourable field of hygiene. Who, he asks passionately, gave them the water-carts? Who prohibited the washing of clothes in the City drinking-troughs? Who entered the Public Library and at great personal risk removed a dead cat from the Historical Section? Saunders—Saunders—Saunders. Or (just possibly) Corcoran—Corcoran—Corcoran.

It is enough. Without more ado the necessary funds are voted. And two days later, his bags packed and clearly labelled "Dudley, Worcs.," Saunders is ready for the great adventure.

How did he travel, I wonder. On shipboard all the way? Probably not. A man of his sensibility would not fail to realise some of the disadvantages of life on an ocean liner. There would be too many distractions, too much social diversion for a man with a mission; and, worse, his companions, finding out the purpose of his visit to the Old Country, might not understand. They might even, such is the weakness of human flesh, scoff at it. No, I am almost certain he travelled overland. Sitting day after day in his compartment on the Trans-Siberian Railway, he would have leisure and privacy to lose himself in pleasant sanitary speculation. Lake Baikal, Irkutsk, Krasnoyarsk, the friendly rivers Ob and Tobol—he would pass them in a dream. Beneath him the throbbing wheels would sing their endless chant, "Tipping at Dudley—tipping at Dudley." At Omsk the piles of worn-out samovars beside the line might bring perhaps a transient frown to his smooth brow. But on the whole he would come in untroubled majesty to Europe, to the Channel, to glorious Dudley, Mecca of the refuse-tipping world.

It is curious that no news has leaked through of his actual arrival at the town. There must have been a reception, a band perhaps, the reading of a message of greeting from the dustmen of Shanghai to their confrères in Worcestershire. But Saunders' hatred of notoriety kept the whole thing dark. He wanted no popular acclaim, no flaring headlines in the London papers. For him the path of duty was the way to glory. He came, he saw, he noted; and then,



"YES, MRS. JONES, THE TULIPS AND MY WIFE HAVE FELT THE COLD WEATHER TERRIBLY."

unless my estimate of the man is entirely at fault, he turned on his heel and took the glad news back to rubbish-laden Shanghai.

I like to think that he took something else, equally precious, back with him. Incurably romantic, my imagination toys with the idea that a keen Sanitary Inspectress from Philadelphia, Pa., drawn to Dudley by the same resistless magnet, met him there and gave herself confidently into his hygienic keeping. Somewhere on Dudley's splendid dump these two plighted their troth, dreaming of germ-free days in far-off Shanghai, while innumerable sardine-tins, catching the pale March sunlight, smiled down kindly on their love.

But one must not get carried away. After all, he *may* have been a married Chinaman with a bias against divorce.

H. F. E.

My F. in the Brown Hat

THE horse is the friend of man, and presumably of woman also.

The word "friend" is defined by the *Pocket Oxford Dictionary* as follows:—

> "One joined to another in intimacy and mutual benevolence apart from sexual or family love (*be, keep make ff. with,*) be, get, on good terms with; often joc. of stranger, &c., already mentioned, as *my. f. in the brown hat. . . .*"

My f. in the brown hat wears no hat, nor is there anything brown about him save his eyes. He is a grey. At the moment it would be wrong to assume that we are joined together in intimacy or mutual benevolence. My intentions towards him are benevolent. His intentions towards me are not. He walks close to the jamb of the gate of the riding school to scrape me against it. When we are in Richmond Park he trots towards trees with low branches to knock me off. He throws up his head to alarm me. Spasmodically he canters, knowing full well that in two lessons one does not learn to canter with confidence.

On the other hand, my f. in the brown hat is burdened by a dire form of double bit, snaffle, curb or whatever it is. This is designed, I suspect, to give me a certain advantage over him. It is not so designed by any wish of mine. I dislike the double bit, snaffle, curb, or whatever it is as much as he does. Friendship is prejudiced by such things.

I cannot explain this to him, and mutual benevolence seems a long way off.

Our third meeting will be on Wednesday next. On Wednesday next I propose to secrete two lumps of sugar, and when we are unobserved I propose to offer these two lumps of sugar to my f. in the brown hat. I hope, despite the double bit, snaffle, curb or whatnot, he will negotiate them.

By that means I hope to be, keep, make ff. with. If he avoids the jamb of the gate I shall believe I have succeeded. If he avoids trees, I shall know it.

* * * * *

It has occurred to me that it is the dog and not the horse that is the friend of man, and presumably of woman also. However——

Mr. Silvertop on Ambition

We were discussing ambition, and the snares it laid for men.

"Like most things in this world," said Mr. Silvertop, "folks 'aven't properly made up their minds about it. There's what you might call two schools of thought. One'll tell you you're not worth your stuffing if you don't fix your eye on some glittering goal on the 'orizon and make for it like a perishing blood-'ound, knocking 'ell out of any other blood-'ounds 'oo may 'ave fancied the same path, and the other'll tell you that all that matters is just being 'appy as you are and it's a reg'lar sin even to start wondering where to-morrow's kippers are a-coming from."

Out of the quite seemingly infinite branches of his family tree Mr. Silvertop detached for contemplation a twig named Ernie, who was a second-cousin's son, he declared.

"There wasn't nothing of the thruster about Ernie," he said, "for it was plain that a lad 'oo'd stuck to the Wapping dust-carts for twelve years 'ad 'is ambitions well in 'and. All, that is, except one, for 'is 'ole 'eart was in sea-fishing, and 'e swore that one day 'e'd land a catch what would make 'is name a byword in turbot-and-'alibut circles. Every Sunday 'e used to 'op out of bed at sparrow-cheep and go off to one of them piers on the South Coast where the anglers was thick as barnacles and the promenade deck, when they all got their lines out, looked like a ruddy loom.

"Well, the fish down there 'ad too many vittymines chucked out from the boarding-'ouses often to get 'ungry enough to go taking silly risks round the pier, and in spite of 'im 'aving three or four rods and 'arf-a-dozen great satchels full of every sort of 'ook and sinker ever thought of, Ernie used to call it a reel slap-up sporting day when 'e brought 'ome a brace of six-ounce dabs. 'E reckoned an 'undred miles in a train and eight hours in an east wind well spent for a catch like that, for the truth was the pore chap was proper barmy about fishing.

"But although 'e'd never 'ooked nothing what 'e couldn't slip into 'is waistcoat-pocket, 'e 'ad the notion firmly fixed in 'is napper that one day 'e was a-going to run across the big stuff, and 'e was determined that when 'is lucky day come 'e wasn't a-going to take no chances on account of weak tackle. 'Is pals on the pier used to chaff 'im about 'is rods and call 'em 'Ernie's curtain-poles,' and 'is reel was known down there as the 'Salvation Army drum.' The line 'e used would 'ave moored the *Queen Mary* in an 'urricane.

"Well, one Sunday 'e was a-sitting on 'is little stool in a reg'lar gale, 'aving just cast, thinking to 'imself it was a bit 'ard 'e 'adn't 'ad a bite for a month when the bloke on 'is right 'ad 'ad an 'arf-pound plaice two Sundays back and the bloke on 'is left 'ad lost a nice whiting the Sunday before, when all of a sudden the bell on the end of 'is rod begins to ring like 'e'd never 'eard it ring before. 'E ses at first 'e thought there was a fire-engine on the pier, but soon as 'e grabbed 'is rod 'e knew 'e was into one of them big-game fishes taking its 'oliday-cruise down the South Coast. It 'appened to be 'ooked on 'is biggest rod, and even that was bent double.

"You can guess what an 'ell of a shimozzle there was round Ernie. News gets along a pier as quick as across them jungles, and without no beating on the tum-tum, neither. Nothing worth while 'ad 'appened on that pier since the Lady Mayoress's bath-chair 'ad taken things into its own 'ands two years back and lived up to its name, and before you could say 'Mine's a bitter' there was a proper Cup-tie crowd round Ernie. Everybody shouted 'emselves 'oarse giving advice, but the gale was so bad 'e could 'ardly 'ear a word.

"At first 'e wasn't able to make no 'eadway against 'is fish, it was a-struggling so, but after a bit it began to tire. So did Ernie, but 'e 'ad just enough strength left to reel it in very slow. On account of a big bulge in the underpart of the pier nobody could see what it was.

"'It'll be a young shark, you mark my words,' ses the Secretary of the Club.

"'Garn! From the way the rod-point's working I can tell it's a tunny,' ses another.

"'I'll give five to one it's a cod,' ses a third.

"'And I'll take you,' ses a fourth, 'oo was leaning out further than the rest, 'for it isn't. It's a girl!'

"Well, of course pore Ernie thought they was 'aving 'im on, but 'e only 'ad to reel in a bit to see for 'imself they wasn't. The girl was 'ooked ever so neatly in the seat of 'er skirt, and an empty rowing-boat was floating out from under the pier. She was glaring up at Ernie with a sort of fixed expression on 'er dial what made 'im come over so weak 'e 'ad to stop winding for a moment. She was such a big strong girl.

"'Trust Ernie to 'ook a mermaid,' cries a wag, and there was an 'ell of a laugh. 'What about giving 'im the cup for the catch of the year? The rules don't say nothing about what kind of fish.' And at that there was another 'earty laugh. The only two 'oo didn't join in was Ernie and 'is catch, 'oo 'e'd landed at last, and neither of 'em 'ad the breath or the inclination. They was both a-leaning on the rail fair panting. The girl never once took 'er 'optics off Ernie, and 'e never once took 'is off 'er, for she was a proper peach. 'E was just asking 'imself 'ow long it would take 'er to get back enough wind to clip 'im on the jaw and scratch 'is eyes out, and wondering what was the manly thing to do about it, when to 'is and everyone else's amazement she tottered over to 'im and flung 'er arms round 'is neck.

"'"'Ow can I ever thank you?' she cries, 'ysterical.

"'"Ever *what*?' 'e gasps.

"'"Ever make up to you for saving me from such an 'orrid, terrible end. You great big beautiful man!' she cries. 'My rescuer!'

"That was where Ernie fainted, and you couldn't blame 'im. But they soon brought 'im to in the bar of the restyront, and then 'e learned that the pore girl, 'oose name was Flossie and 'oose arms was still round 'is neck, 'ad lost 'er oars and was being blown out to sea at an 'ell of a rate when 'is cast 'ad 'appened to catch 'er astern.

"Ernie's strong tackle," said Mr. Silvertop, with conviction, "paid 'im 'ands down. 'Er dad owned a tidy little pub over at Southsea, and she being 'is only child and 'e being close on seventy, 'e 'anded it over to 'er and Ernie soon as they was spliced.

"Which they very soon was," he added, after a pause. Eric.

The Speech

March 18th.

Dear Conkleshill,—I have been appointed Secretary of the Old Wimburians' Association, and my first job is to arrange the annual dinner. I simply can't get hold of anybody at all to propose the main toast of the evening—"The Old School"—and I wonder whether, to oblige a pal, you would do it? Knowing how amazingly busy an important man like you must be, I feel it's a lot to ask. Of course you can talk as long as you like and say what you like.

B. Quivereasy.

March 20th.

Dear Quivereasy,—I *am* frightfully busy, and as it happens I had an



"This is very interesting. Do you fellows often play seven-a-side Rugger?"
"No, Sah. Dere was forty-nine of us when de game began."

important engagement on the night of the dinner, but as you make such a point of it I will do what you ask.

L. Conkleshill.

March 24th.

Dear Conkleshill,—Major-General Sir Parker Spavin, K.C.M.G., one of our most famous Old Boys, has just written to say he will be present at the dinner this year, and I feel that I simply *must* ask him to propose the toast of "The Old School," which you had kindly offered to do. I'm sure you won't mind supporting it instead. You will be limited to ten minutes.

B. Quivereasy.

March 27th.

Dear Conkleshill,—Thanks for your letter offering so "support" the toast of the "Old School," which is to be proposed by Major-General Sir Parker Spavin, K.C.M.G., but I'm just wondering, old boy, whether the plan is a wise one, as there will be so many distinguished Old Wimburians present. I'm just a shade afraid that people will think you've been given the honour because you are a pal of mine. So I've put you down instead to support one of the minor toasts, "The Assistant-Masters, Past and Present." I hope you will appreciate that it has been quite an effort on my part to squeeze you in at all, most of my committee never having heard of you. I had to sort of pretend that you were quite well-known in your own profession, but I never mind telling a white lie to help a pal.

B. Quivereasy.

March 31st.

Dear Conkleshill,—Thanks for your letter agreeing to support the toast "Assistant-Masters, Past and Present." The time allotted for your remarks is two minutes, and I do hope you won't exceed this, as nothing is so annoying as any upset of a carefully-prepared time-table.

B. Quivereasy.

April 5th.

Dear Conkleshill,—I have to thank you for your letter of last week telling me that your speech in support of the toast "Assistant-Masters, Past and Present" was prepared and that you had spent several hours rehearsing it in front of the glass. Don't think I'm not appreciative of the trouble you've taken, old boy, but after all I've simply *had* to give the job to Pettifer-Dykes, who was very hurt at not being included in the list of speakers. But as you're so anxious to speak I'll see if I can't fit you in *next year*, when I think I may be able to manage it by squeezing in an extra toast, "The Secretary of the Old Boys' Association and the Dinner Committee."

B. Quivereasy.

Gossip-Writer at Play

"I could pick out the black hair of Mr. Edward Wolfe, the artist. . . ."
Daily Paper.

"Madame Bovary, in case you don't know, was the French novelist, Gilbert Flaubert's sweetheart, and lived between 1821-80."
Vancouver Paper.

Gilbert Frankau, surely?

"An Eventful Year for the Army.
Planning for War."
From "The Statesman."

Who says the army isn't go-ahead?



Old-Fashioned Uncle. "I REGRET TO SAY, MY BOY, THAT I DID NOT FINISH YOUR BOOK. TO TELL THE TRUTH, I BURNT IT."
New-Fashioned Nephew. "NEVER MIND, UNCLE. I'LL SEND YOU ANOTHER COPY."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

The Truth about a Genius

To the greatest of English historians justice, on the human side, has at last been done. He has been redeemed from the pious perversions of foe and friend. So lively, sympathetic and discerning is the biography which Mr. D. M. LOW has written of *Edward Gibbon* (CHATTO AND WINDUS, 15/-) that surely it must have been greeted among the shades with an approving rap on a famous snuff-box. Here is no paradox of a manikin creating a masterpiece, but the honest and convincing portrait of a whole and comprehensible man. And if it is a man at whom we may sometimes legitimately laugh, it is also one for whom, his literary achievement apart, our prevalent and final sentiments must be admiration and liking. GIBBON had his foibles. He was vain, a good deal of a snob, and as prone to philandering as are most predestinate bachelors. But he was generous, considerate of all and sundry, and incapable of harbouring resentments, which are virtues not always possessed by the literary kind. In his relations with a recklessly selfish father he showed himself almost saintly in forbearance; while in the *affaire* CURCHOD, if his part was not heroic, it certainly was not that of a cad. The eighteenth century did not wear its heart on its embroidered sleeve; but Mr. LOW, no doubt correctly, divines the reality of feeling beneath the elaborate phrase. Mr. Low in fact is very much at home in that admirable age, and puts us at our ease there and on friendly terms with one of its most distinguished inhabitants.

Sorrows of a Painter in Water-Colour

The landscape-painter's "profession," I take it, is no more a profession than the poet's. A vocation can be directed into popular and paying channels, in which case it sometimes ceases to be a vocation; and the life of TURNER shows the attempt made successfully. *The Life of John Sell Cotman* (FABER AND FABER, 25/-) shows it made and frustrated. Mr. SYDNEY D. KITSON, a great collector and authority, has founded a fine book on the immemorial struggle thus pathetically exemplified. COTMAN'S stagnating and dwindling Norwich—so perfect an environment for a water-colour painter, so hopeless a market—is delightfully described, as are the manners of his patrons, the genial Catholic gentlefolk of the North, the pompous banker *cognoscenti* of his native city. Illuminating letters abound, the artist's own correspondence passing from youthful exuberance to the terse agonies of a man in the grip of disaster. Few painters have penned better travel-pictures than COTMAN'S hazardous journey to Mont St. Michel across the "flat purply-grey sand"; and a hundred-and-fifty reproductions of his exquisite water-colours, oils, etchings,

lithographs and drawings show how deeply in their creator's debt is the world which let him die its debtor.

India

In *The I.C.S.* (FABER AND FABER, 8/6) Sir EDWARD BLUNT, equipped with every qualification for the task, sets out to depict for the uninitiate the Indian Civil Service of to-day and to-morrow. It may be questioned how far this can be affected by any mere recital of fact and experience—especially in an India which contains a dozen different Indias. However, here at any rate is a magnificently lucid statement of all relevant considerations, historical, economic, social and practical; and if the note of confidence and optimism sounds at times a little strained, the picture is on the whole impartially presented. The change in the Heavenborn's position could not be better put—"Where his predecessor took action he must ask for orders: where his predecessor gave orders he must advise." Alas! indeed. But *per contra* we are reminded that if to-morrow's India will be less at the Civilian's mercy, he will be less at hers. Perhaps sufficient stress has not been laid on the desirability of a taste for politics in the prospective Civilian, who must battle openly in fields from which his fathers were stringently (if mistakenly) debarred. But at least the inquiring candidate should know now exactly where he stands; for as an exposition of the I.C.S.—its mechanism, tradition, achievement and hope—this is masterly.

Assembly of Religions

The World Congress of Faiths, held in London in July, 1936, was a novel and remarkable manifestation of world-unity. Its creator and organiser, Sir FRANCIS YOUNGHUSBAND, in *A Venture of Faith* (MICHAEL JOSEPH, 12/6), reports the proceedings as fully as his scope of two hundred pages allows. Reporting is usually dull work, and it must be confessed that the reader's interest in this section, though occasionally seized, is never held. But when, as at the beginning and end of the volume, Sir FRANCIS writes out of his own head, he has no difficulty in commanding attention. In fact the recital of his spiritual adventures is not only engrossing but of a deep general significance. This book would seem a fresh confirmation of the fact that the atmosphere and feeling of an assembly cannot be reduced to writing. The Congress continues its excellent work at Oxford this year. The best advice one can give the public is to attend in person rather than to read about it afterwards.

Merely Players

Mr. SOMERSET MAUGHAM's unpleasant picture of "the profession" needs relieving, I feel, not so much by greater tenderness to the half-wits it victimises as by some reference to more auspicious possibilities. The leading lady of his *Theatre* (HEINEMANN, 7/6) does not get a square deal, for although, save as a good hard worker, she is utterly despicable, you are not shown how, the stage and the public being what they are, she could be anything else. *Julia*, with her well-preserved actor-manager of a husband, her "kept boy," her rich erotic female friend and her troupe of masseuses and me...als, is sufficiently revolting. But when her son grows up to bait her for her lack of motherliness and "reality," you do not feel that the engineer of this great moment has ever got to grips with the ethics of wage-earning *v.* motherhood or the still more difficult relations of morality and art. Depressing and superficial as is the drama of its heroine's predilection, the book has picturesque interludes and the ingenuity of its technical *savoir vivre*. I commend *Julia's* holiday at St. Malo and



Guide. "WILL YOU PAY ME NOW, SIR, JUST IN CASE WE GET SEPARATED?"

the ruse by which she rids herself of a young rival as memorable examples of each.

Capital

Mr. STEEN EILER RASMUSSEN considers that there is more true town-planning in the unrestricted growth of London than in all the carefully-controlled development of Continental contemporaries. Mr. RASMUSSEN likes London. He likes its squares, its underground stations, its Hampstead Heath, its advertisements, even many of its most humdrum houses. He sighs for its vanishing painted stucco. Into his description there enters something of Roman and of mediæval history; he has studied Classic and Gothic architecture even in their rare confusions and overlappings at the hands of the jerry-builder; he is no less familiar with the impact of industrialism than with the difference between the British and the European conceptions of "sport," and he applies all his learning—in *London* (CAPE, 15/-)—to trace with a kind of earnest ingenuousness the advance of the metropolis as an unresting organic expansion from generation to generation. His book is full of information, illustrations and awkward English. Since he believes the secret of London's success lies in the Englishman's insistence on having a house to himself and on having it well out towards the countryside, the writer utters terrible warnings against the danger of congesting the centre with blocks of flats. Broadly speaking he seems to say that London can grow aright only so long as no Englishman really wishes to live there.



"IT WAS JUST IN THE NATURE OF AN EXPERIMENT."

For Those Who Live in Wodehouses

Nine short stories from the pen of Mr. P. G. WODEHOUSE herald in what should have been the spring more beautifully than any vulgar tinted blossom. Blossom gets broken; these little vernal tributes, strongly bound in a bouquet by the firm of HERBERT JENKINS and offered almost as a gift at seven-and-sixpence, will endure. Labelled *Lord Emsworth and Others*, they bring us into touch with several valued friends. Three are related by the *Oldest Member*, three by that most unscrupulous of nephews, *Ukridge*, one, of *Freddie Widgeon*, by a *Crumpet* at the Drones, one by *Mr. Mulliner* himself; and first in the collection and certainly in merit is an account of how rearmament came to Blandings in the shape of an air-gun, and brought moral chaos in its train. For second place my verdict is a dead-heat between the *Widgeon* story, nothing less than an awful warning to young men about the monetary dangers of participation in the activities of Mothers' Missions, and the *Ukridge*, in which *Aunt Julia's* comfortable mansion at Wimbledon is turned in her absence into a most lucrative private hotel.

Queen *v.* Queen

In *The Door Between* (GOLLANCZ, 7/6) Mr. ELLERY QUEEN and his father fight a battle of wits which is always keen and at times not a little ferocious. To *Inspector Queen's* unimaginative mind *Eva MacClure* must have murdered her aunt, and he was determined that she should be punished for the crime. Opposed to him was his son, who had been engaged to help the *MacClures* in extricating *Eva* from an extremely precarious position. Seldom indeed has ELLERY set himself a tougher problem in deduction, and that he solved it in a manner which carries conviction is yet another proof of his skill. I have read nearly all of the QUEEN novels, and once or twice they have been too involved and gory for my liking, but this story can be unreservedly praised both for its construction and the restraint with which it is told.

Suspense

Ample evidence can be found to prove that our sensational novelists are becoming more and more inclined to choose their victims from people who almost demand drastic punishment, and assuredly *Mr. Bernard Pommery*, in *Policeman's Holiday* (COLLINS, 7/6), deserved to be hanged. But when he was, as the local paper put it, "found depending from a tree" in a wood not far from his house, it was up to *Chief-Inspector Beale* of the C.I.D. to discover by whom he had been so lethally treated. This was no easy task, believe me, for *Pommery's* enemies were more numerous than his friends. Mr. RUPERT PENNY'S first novel, *The Talkative Policeman*, received high praise from the critics, and now by attending to characterisation and providing an ingenious plot he confirms the favourable impression that his work had already created. This tale does not lack minor defects, but in the main it runs on a well-laid track to a legitimately surprising conclusion.

Boat-Lovers

So intimate is the connection between Brittany and Cornwall that Lieutenant LAWSON LUARD has made a happy choice in alternating the scenes of *Wild Goose Chase* (COLLINS, 7/6) between them. In Carantec there was a saying that "When you build a boat with Eugène Levant your will-power is no more." The "Monsieur" who tells this story (it is not difficult to identify him) had previously employed *Levant*, and when he revisited Carantec fears—perhaps not altogether unwelcome—beset him. Unless he was very firm he would once more be engaged in boat-building, but he determined to be firm. His reception is delightfully described: we see the web that the wily Bretons cast round him grow tighter and tighter. He cannot resist them. I have no space to mention the details of this second boat's building and of the disaster that ultimately happened to her when triumphant success was in sight. I must, however, say that for anyone who has ever been fascinated by the beauty of a boat this is really a glorious tale, and *Levant* is a most engaging enthusiast.

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Charivaria

"THE average bus-driver can tell the private motorist many things about road conduct," says a writer. But the motorist sometimes wishes he wouldn't do it in public.

★ ★ ★

A prominent aeroplane-maker says that aeroplanes will never be very much cheaper. But parachutes, sooner or later, are sure to come down.

★ ★ ★

"Once every few hundred years a terrible pestilence sweeps over the world," points out an historian. It is pure bad luck that the present one happens to be all-talking, all-singing, all-dancing.

★ ★ ★

"The destructive Colorado Beetle may lurk in your vegetable garden," warns a writer. Owners of vegetable gardens should keep a sharp look-out for beetles with an American accent.



★ ★ ★

"Italian scientists are spinning a synthetic wool said to be even more resilient, hard wearing and white than that woven from casein, the basis of which is sour silk."—*News Item.*

So even a silkworm can turn.

★ ★ ★

"The European Powers should meet on common ground," declares a pacifist. Might we ask him what he supposes is now going on in Spain?

★ ★ ★

"IS YOUR HOME UP-TO-DATE WITH GAS?"
League of Nations Publication.

Not yet; but we are watching the European situation with interest.

★ ★ ★

A report refers to a Chinese soldier named General CHIN-CHIN. We hope he is in command of the rum ration.



Stream-lined houses are being advertised in connection with one estate. In most districts, however, the floods have subsided.

★ ★ ★

"STANDARD FLIES AT ROYAL LODGE."
Daily Paper.

As specified by the Fly Marketing Board?

★ ★ ★

An explorer says that during a week-end in the Sahara he travelled over hundreds of miles of sand without seeing any human beings. Brighton would make a nice change for him.

★ ★ ★

"There are some people who seem to delight in taking a distorted view of everything," says a writer. Some even delight in pasting the results into albums.

★ ★ ★

An ornithologist points out that the thrush often conceals its nest with great cunning. It seems a great waste of time. Surely the bird must know that its eggs will be spotted.



★ ★ ★

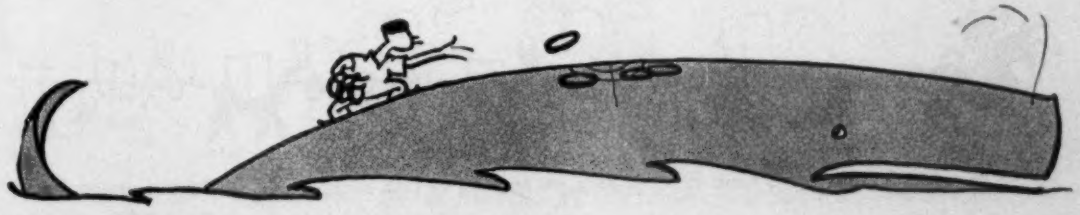
Twelve bars of salt were taken by a burglar who broke into a grocer's shop at Manchester. It is thought that both his neighbours are possibly anglers.

★ ★ ★

"What is the chief danger of a long engagement?" asks a writer. Other than marriage, that is to say.

★ ★ ★

"The ocean voyager of to-day can, if he desires, live in a self-contained flat and not see the sea at all until the end of his journey," says a writer. JONAH'S view is that there is nothing so very new in that.



A Golden Opportunity

THE other day as I was doing up my red, white and blue braces a thought occurred to me. This is surprisingly often the case. There seems to be something about the action of swinging the braces from behind up over the shoulders which stimulates the nerve-centres of the brain and causes it to throw off some unexpected piece of original thinking. Then during the leisurely attachment of the tabs to the frontal buttons the idea has time to develop and ripen. You get the same thing during the tying of the tie, though not, I think, to the same extent or intensity. Psychologists should look into the matter.

However, what concerns me at the moment is not the mechanical causation of thinking but the actual thought which struck me the other day when, as I say, I was doing up my red, white and blue braces. It seems to be pretty generally recognised that those who are going to watch the Procession on May 12th have got to be in position for it round about six o'clock in the morning. That is to say, they will have a matter of five hours or more sitting in the stands, standing in the streets, leaning out of windows, balancing on chimney-pots and hanging head-downwards from parapets before the brave music of a distant drum warns them that something is going to happen.

What use is going to be made of these precious hours?

I feel fairly vague about the actual number of people who can be accommodated along the processional route, but supposing we put it at a couple of millions. That means that for five hours two million people assembled in a space of not much more than one square mile will be hungering for something, anything, to do. Ten million potential man-hours going to waste! Will anyone deny that there is here afforded the most astonishing opportunity for the distribution of Questionnaires that the world has ever seen?

One of the gravest difficulties that the Questionnaire-organiser has always had to face is the problem of its distribution to a sufficient number of people to make the result representative. Hardly less prejudicial to its success has been the fact that of the persons circularised about eighty per cent. almost invariably fail to reply. But here both these difficulties disappear. You have the people—a thoroughly representative section of the British Commonwealth—delivered as it were into your hands. There is plenty of time. And I venture to wager that by about nine o'clock they will be in a mood to welcome even the most audacious interference with their private lives. The filling up of Questionnaires will suit them down to the ground.

I have given a lot of thought to the question of the most suitable form for the Coronation Questionnaire. Obviously the most satisfactory plan and the one most worthy of the occasion would be to ask everybody everything—a general inquiry ranging from politics to the kind of toothpaste preferred. But there are objections. The very limited space allowed to each person on the stands, and of course the lack of elbow-room which is to be expected among the non-paying spectators along the streets, make it desirable to keep the size of the Questionnaire within bounds. Also a certain amount of borrowing of pencils may be necessary and this will take time. So on the whole I have decided to keep the Questionnaire to one subject—the vital one of National Health.

National Health statistics do of course exist. Figures are published from time to time concerning the number of cases of mumps, measles, diphtheria and so on which have been notified during the past twelve months. This is all right as far as it goes, but it does not go far enough. It is also hopelessly out of date. Mumps and measles and diphtheria are not the diseases from which the nation as a whole suffers to-day. Jones, for instance, has not got mumps or measles or diphtheria; nor for that matter has he got scarlet fever or scurvy or bronchitis. But is he well? Far from it. Ask him yourself, if you like. Or look on his dressing-table and try to deduce from the bottles you see there what is the matter with him. His malady, like that of Smith and, so one hears, of Robinson, is something far more modern and pernicious than mumps or any of that lot. The whole purpose of my Questionnaire will be to discover the comparative frequency of the twenty or thirty new diseases which have ravaged the country since the War.

Here is a rough draft of Page 1.

NATIONAL HEALTH QUESTIONNAIRE

(*Please answer these questions and then hand your pencil to a less fortunate spectator*)

1. What do you take for Depression?
2. You feel Worn Out when you go to bed after a long day at the office. Would you describe yourself as suffering from (*a*) Lassitude, (*b*) Tiredness or (*c*) Nervous Debility. (N.B.—At least one of these must be attempted.)
3. Are you schizophrenic at all?
4. Are there any traces in your family history of Drowsiness, the Dumps or Irritability? Mention any fatal cases.
5. Your failure to get that post in Aleppo has been ascribed by various friends to—
   (*a*) Mid-day Flop
   (*b*) Slackness
   (*c*) Shoe-Dowdiness.
   Which do you favour?
6. How about Eyestrain?
7. Have you noticed any symptoms of Lung-Sootiness, Bus Dizziness, Telephone Ears or Tube Inertia?
8. When did you last consult your doctor about Spring-Weariness?
9. Did he suggest Bucko, Zippo, Guppo, Hippo or Dr. Scrymgeour's Panacea for Sedentary Workers?
10. Would you say you have got Metatarsal Fatigue? Or is the discomfort elsewhere?

H. F. E.



"IF THE PUBLISHERS DON'T COME UP TO SCRATCH WE 'LL HAVE TO FALL BACK ON THE FACE-CREAM PEOPLE."



THE PUBLIC PAYS

CHORUS OF OPPORTUNISTS. "BE A SPORT; AFTER ALL IT'S THE CORONATION."



Anxious Patient. "When I wake in the morning I feel just terrible."
Festive Physician. "Not worse than I do, I'll wager."

The Britisch Empire

Typical conversations for nordic students of britisch ways and means

VI.—Big Games A-Hunting

Lord Smith. Now what about a-hunting-we-will-go? On safaro! Ahoy! Tontivi! Tontivi!

Hon. Biggs. Why now, certainly. I have already arranged an a-schooting excursion into the Jungl, if you would like to come. But realise, if you please, that this is not alike to the englisch fox-chase. It is quite a different brace of shoes, yes, indeed!

Viscount Brown. Which beasts shall we account for?

Hon. Biggs. The leon, the rhinocero, the elefant, mayhap the hibbopotamu. Be prepared for a long trail a-winding. It is not all done from here, I can assure you.

[*They arrive in the Jungl.*

Lord Robinson. The noises! All the birdlings a-jabbering, the apes vociferous and so on! The Jungl is by no means reticent.

Lord Smith. All this splendour is on the Empire. To think of that! [*A leon snorts in the distance.*

Viscount Brown. After him!

Hon. Biggs. See that your firepieces are a-load! Sch! By stealth, I pray!

Lord Robinson. Yonder a rhinocero! A splendid one. It stamps, thinking to strike fear into our hearts. I shall take the first schot.

Hon. Biggs. Stay! Heavens! It is foolhardi! It charges! It is coming our way!

Lord Smith. For my part I shall take shelter in a tree until the affair has passed over. For a whole skin I can recommend going to earth among the tree-leaves!

Viscount Brown. It is upon us! Schoot!

[Lord Robinson *schoots the rhinocero.*

All. Bravo!

Viscount Brown. Let us skin it, taking the horn, and thus have trophies of our enjoyable time on the Empire, to hang up in the Klub!

Hon. Biggs. Wait! There approach some aboriginals.

Lord Smith. Let us hope they are not man-eating kannibles meaning business!

Hon. Biggs. Have no fear! I can speak the dialectik. They are saying, "Hullo! How d' ye do?" "Well done, to schoot the bad rhinocero!" "Welcome, whitefellows!" and remarques of that brand.

Lord Smith. Still, I for one am schi at their approaches.

Hon. Biggs. They are saying, to-morrow we shall take part in hunt-the-leon if we should so desire it. They are to show us where he stalks.

The Milords. Very well, then. It will be something to tell them all about, at home, in the Klub, eh?

Meeting X

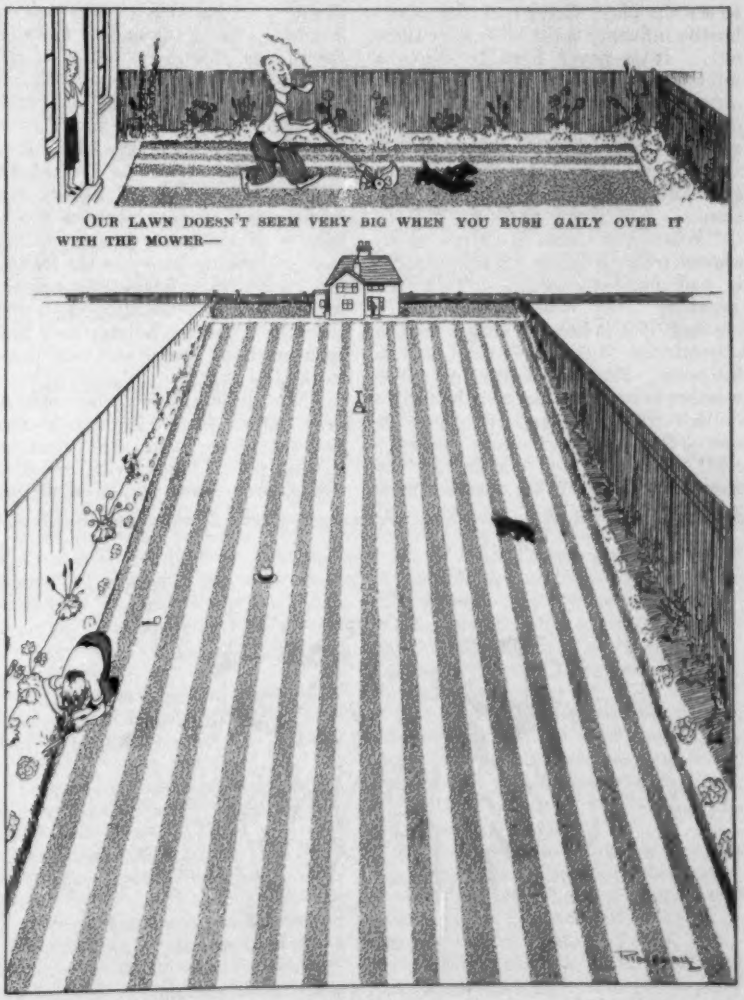
I HAVE always been a great admirer of X. Most public figures leave me perfectly cold, but I have always felt that if I could have five minutes' quiet chat with X I should have really lived, and for the last ten years I have made several attempts to meet him. It has not been easy to arrange, because X is the sort of man who gets his picture on the front page of the evening paper every time he catches cold, and will get a couple of columns in *The Times* when he dies, and maybe even a "third leader" if news is pretty slack.

Back in '27, when I was young and innocent, I wrote to X and said that I was a great admirer of his work (he writes books in his spare time) and would be most frightfully bucked if he would let me call one afternoon and shake him by the hand. I rather expected to get a nice letter from him saying that he would be delighted to see me, and hoped I would be able to spare the time to stay for a cup of tea. Or even dinner. I wasn't sure whether I wanted to be asked to dinner, because, though X is almost the greatest living authority on food, I was just a shade doubtful whether my evening clothes were in fashion at the moment. Actually I needn't have bothered, because for some extraordinary reason X just didn't answer my letter. Great men are so much greater and busier than they used to be in, say, Dr. JOHNSON's time. In those days it was practically impossible to go to London without somebody asking you to dine and meet JOHNSON and GARRICK and REYNOLDS and GOLDSMITH and a few others.

I tried again in '30, but this time I showed a little more guile. I wrote to X saying that my name was Sympson (a lie) and that I had just read his new book, *Reflections on Ukrainian Folk-Lore* (another lie), and that, as I had just returned from the Ukraine (lie number three), I would like to meet him. By this time I had a quite modern evening suit, and I pictured a cheery scene at his London flat, with me eating his dinner and X talking about the Ukraine. I should of course have found out first where the Ukraine was from the encyclopædia and made a few mental notes about the habits of the population, if any. This time X actually replied, but merely to regret "that he was unable, owing to pressure of business, to grant Mr. Sympson an interview."

In '33 I wrote again, this time under the name of Harris (more subterfuge). X, by the way, is almost if not quite the greatest living authority on the German poet, Gulph, and I happened to have just read an article by X in a weekly paper in which he mentioned Gulph. So I wrote to X and said that I did not know who he (X) was, but that he ought to be shot for writing such a rotten article, revealing therein an ignorance of the poet Gulph that was difficult to understand in a man who had the entrée to the columns of *The Weekly Critic*. I told him that I had been a worshipper of Gulph since childhood, and that I had been deeply pained by his slighting reference to the greatest poet of all time. I thought this was rather clever, and sent the evening suit to the cleaners in anticipation of an invitation to dine and listen to his explanation of what he had really meant about Gulph. But instead I just got three lines to say that "Mr. X regretted that Mr. Harris had apparently misunderstood his reference to Gulph in *The Weekly Critic*, but if Mr. Harris would consult *Who's Who* he would find that Mr. X was not entirely ignorant on the subject of Gulph and his works."

I am still determined to meet X, however, and am contemplating breaking into his flat at dead of night, disguised as a burglar and giving my name as Sikes. But I suppose X will stick to his guns to the last and merely remark as he rings up the police, "Mr. X regrets that he is unable to see his way to part with any of his silver to Mr. Sikes, and will be obliged to Mr. Sikes if he will accompany the constabulary as quietly as possible."



OUR LAWN DOESN'T SEEM VERY BIG WHEN YOU RUSH GAILY OVER IT WITH THE MOWER—

BUT WHEN YOU START CHAMPING ROUND IT WITH THE CLIPPERS . . . ! ! !

Bad for Business

"Those who think with envy of the jolly life of the theatre," said my poor friend Poker, "should be present at one of the box-office inquests at which managers, backers, authors and all sadly inquire why more people do not come to the play.

"'Ten pounds less than last week,' sighs the manager. 'Why?' And bravely we all tell him—

"'There was a snowstorm on Friday.'

"'Big Fight on Wednesday.'

"'L.C.C. Election.'

"'A lot of flu about.'

"'Everybody's abroad.'

"'The road's up.'

"It is understood, of course, that if the people do stay away from a play it is never because they do not wish to see the play. Some extraneous and hostile influence must have kept them out. It is never hard to discover influences hostile to the theatre: indeed they are so numerous that the one difficulty is to determine which is at work this week. But theatrical folk are famous for fortitude, and we generally find some comforting solution.

"When you come to think of it, almost everything in life and Nature is bad for the theatre. Take the weather. Any weather is good for reading: if it is hot the people read in a hammock, if it is cold they read in the home. But the theatre—no. Wet weather is bad for business: the people do not want to stand in queues or scurry for trains in the rain. In very cold weather they huddle in the home: and in very hot weather they like to be out and about. In foggy weather they can't get to the theatre and in bright sunshine they don't want to. All weather is bad for us—we're like the farmer; and since there is weather of some sort all the year round we start with a very heavy handicap.

"And that's not all. There are certain bad *combinations* of weather: and these nearly always occur. Take last Friday. Just about six, when the people were thinking of coming to our play, it began to rain like blazes; so the people stayed at home. The next day was Saturday—a matinée day. A mild dose of rain about lunch-time on a matinée day is a good thing; it sends the people indoors: but of course on Saturday it was fine and mild, so that the people went to the silly football-matches.

"At the beginning of a week things are always slack, for the cinemas have drained the pockets of the poor on Sunday; and at the end of the week the rich go away.

"Then there are the public holidays. People think that the big public holidays are good for the theatre, because on the Saturday and the Bank Holiday Monday all the theatres are full. The truth is, of course, that nothing is quite so injurious to the theatre as the public holidays. For two or three weeks *before* the holiday the people are saving up their money for the holiday and stop going to the theatres. *After* the holiday they have spent all their money and can't come to the theatre.

"Next, public affairs, crises, etc. All these are bad for the theatre. General elections, even municipal elections, strikes, political upheavals, royal illnesses, even royal weddings, distract the minds of the people from their proper duty, which is to visit our play. At times of national mourning the people feel that it is wrong to enjoy themselves at the theatres, though there is no harm in reading a book; and at times of national rejoicing there are free shows in every street. Jubilees, Coronations, etc., are very bad. Why should the people pay to see our play when they can peer at Princesses, Ambassadors, decorations and flood-lighting for nothing? And then, to make quite sure, they stop the traffic in all the streets approaching us. They will be opened again, it is true, but by that time the foreign visitors will have gone home.

"You will now begin to have a sort of manager's-eye view of the theatrical year. There is a slight flutter of activity in the first fortnight of January; but then the boys go back to school and the parents settle down to read a book and pay the income-tax. In February the weather is simply foul and keeps the people away; and as soon as it stops raining Lent begins. Reverend gentlemen preach sermons about selfish pleasure and indulgence, and half the population nobly gives up going to the theatre. The other half soon begins to save up for the Easter holidays. Easter comes, and for five days in Holy Week we close. But we have two grand houses on the Saturday and Monday and everyone thinks how rich the manager must be.

"Now the weather is better and not too hot, good theatre weather. But Spring gets into the people's blood, they start darting out into the country, pottering about the garden and going for absurd walks. However, they settle down, the 'Season' begins, everybody is in town, they say, and things look grand for the theatre. But up shoots a crop of odd competitors—Horse-Shows, Military Tournaments, Tattoos, Grand Opera—and everybody seems to go to them: at all events, the manager thinks so. They pass, but there is then a heat-wave, and the people begin to save up for the summer holidays. At the beginning of August the people go away, and they keep on going away till about the end of October. They come back, quite bankrupt, from all the corners of the world. However, for about a week there is generally a little boom in the theatre world. Then comes winter, rain, influenza, bronchial trouble and worry about income-tax. The boom collapses. The people start saving up for Christmas: there are good houses on Boxing Day and New Year's Eve, and then the New Year, with all its horrors, begins.



"As a matter of fact I don't know the first thing about music, but I simply love clapping."



THE BRITISH CHARACTER

TENDENCY TO BE EMBARRASSED BY FOREIGN CURRENCIES

"So you can see that of all the numerous days of the year there are only five or six on which conditions are really favourable for theatrical enterprise: and on two of those the theatres are closed." A. P. H.

The Celebrants

"I YIELD to no man," intoned Ferdinand sternly, "in my loyalty to the Crown, but demonstrativeness——"

"—has never had any part——" I recited.

"—in the British Character," finished Lorna. "But surely, Ferdinand darling," continued my wife in her New Hat voice, "a weeny Union Jack on the bonnet of the car——"

"Not one bit of bunting," said Ferdinand firmly. "Not one flutter of flag. Cheap sentiment. Vulgarity. Pomp and circumstance, like Tibetan prayer-wheels," he added cryptically. "Besides, it might annoy Postle."

Postle, our next-door neighbour, is a Communist. My brother-in-law is a staunch Imperialist. But ever since Postle lent him his bicycle when the car broke down Ferdinand has evinced a deep respect for the views of the extreme Left.

"Oh, very well," Lorna said rebelliously, "we'll have GOD BLESS OUR KING AND QUEEN over the mantelpiece."

"Decorations," pronounced Ferdinand, knell-like, "are entirely incompatible with decorum."

We thanked him sadly, and there the matter rested until some days later.

I returned home one evening to find the front-gate groaning beneath a miniature Arc de Triomphe which supported a large and (I trust) inaccurate portrait of Their Gracious Majesties. I passed, wondering, beneath several strings of the Flags of Empire, and discovered a house which flaunted a banner from every window.

While I stood agape and little short of aghast, Lorna came dancing out of the door. She was wearing a new and almost certainly expensive frock.

"Coronation blue," she explained.

"But what about Ferdinand?"

Lorna pointed to the roof.

I looked and beheld Ferdinand, precariously poised and holding a large Union Jack between his teeth, attaching a flag-staff to the chimney.

"Hi!" I shouted. "What price Tibetan prayer-wheels?"

My brother-in-law managed to make a gesture towards the house next-door. I saw that the Postle residence was now practically invisible beneath a smother of red, white and blue.

"I yield to no man," said Ferdinand with muffled dignity, "in my loyalty to the Crown."

We cheered him to the echo.

At the Pictures

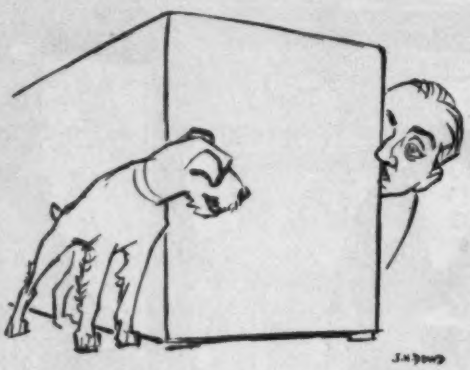
Detection and Shipwreck

The new William Powell and Myrna Loy film, *After the Thin Man*, carries on the exploits of the famous detective, who has now married a vast number of dollars and has retired into private life; but as occasion demands is as ready as ever, even more suave and jaunty, to pursue murderers and, at the right time, with supernatural astuteness and Jove-like authority, to pin their guilt on to them. Need one say more, except possibly that William Powell is getting a little less slender and now and then looks remarkably like the late Arnold Bennett.

There is a good deal in this film to forgive; but it has a way of atoning. There is a scene among *Nick's* lethargic fellow-guests that is far too long; there is a song-and-dance at a night joint that is far too long; there is a row in the dark, during which *Nick* sits imperturbably at the telephone, that is far too long; and there is an exasperating pursuit of a dog—*the* dog—through *Nora's* incredibly-designed house, that is far too long and very silly; while the conclusion of the mystery probably convinces no one, and I feel sure would be found to be anything but watertight. And yet as an entity the picture maintains a hold, if not precisely a grip. Certainly one wants to know the "second end," although when the second end comes, for which the management requests the audience to wait, it probably means a disappointment for those looking forward to more adventures of this carefree couple; and it might even be objected to by a Eugenics Society.

This ingenious concoction is well acted by a company notable for the excellence of the small parts, even the man who has nothing to say but "Likewise" having been carefully chosen. The best of the sub-principals are William Law as a Chinese who looks even more like sinister fate than China; Joseph Calleia, his partner in the night joint; and the murderer, who shall be nameless.

The previous time that I saw Victor McLaglen was in *The Informer*; the last time was the other evening when he was *"Medals" Malone* in *Sea Devils*. Everyone remembering this remarkable personality in the story of the Irish Rebellion will want to see him in whatever he plays, but the new setting will probably disappoint them. They will find none of the old subtlety there; they will find only a more or less human gorilla exhibiting the unadulterated passions that we do not meet with in life, where emotions are mixed. None the less, they will want to see Victor McLaglen, and I applaud their desire.



DETECTION

Asta . . . . . The Dog
Nick Charles . . . . . William Powell

The motive of *Sea Devils* is hatred, and such hatred, unrelenting and persistent, is met with so seldom by any of us, and particularly in a genial drunken petty officer in the Navy, whose expansive chest is covered with decorations, that we get a big surprise to find it controlling the picture. For how, we ask ourselves, could *"Medals" Malone* have won his position if he was so implacable, and how indeed could he have acquired the nickname? Nicknames do not assort with such cruelty.



FAMILY PIECE

Doris Malone . . . Ida Lupino
"Medals" Malone . Victor McLaglen

But the makers of films are not troubled by questions of inconsistency. All that concerns them is, having acquired rights in an outstanding personality, to fit him with a part wherein his great height and his great strength and his manner, now brusque and now engaging, may have play. In *Sea Devils*, I must admit, they have superficially done it: but only superficially. Still, superficies is all that the average film has time for.

If you want to see a simian giant of a man masquerading as a solicitous father you must see Victor McLaglen. If you want to see two or three terrific fights, in the first of which a bar in San Francisco is wrecked, you must see Victor McLaglen, but if you would like either him or his antagonist, *Mike O'Shay* (Preston Foster), a deck-hand in the same Service, to exhibit the faintest sign of these frays, you had better stay away. It has always been a weakness of the films that hand-to-hand combats leave no traces, but never was this immunity so noticeable as in *Sea Devils*. And if you want to watch the skill with which the cinema can create a storm on the ocean, in which the passengers on a yacht can, one by one, be conveyed in a breeches-cradle to the shore, you must go to *Sea Devils*; but you need not believe, any more than I did, that the two leading figures could have retained their senses under the buffeting of such monstrous waves. People in real life, even *Malones* and *O'Shays*, far from being conversational, would have been overwhelmed.

No matter, the story has to be followed; and whatever else we say, leaving the theatre and rejoining the ordinary life of the streets, we cannot help saying, "How can the movies do it! How can such tempests be arranged!" E. V. L.

Regret for Eros

Who may be boarded up for the Coronation

It seems a trifle hard
That Love should be debarred
From mixing with the throng
Who blithely course along
When all the world goes gay
On Coronation Day.

But Love, they say, is blind;
So Eros may not mind.

Sam Doops

EVERY day since the beginning of the week young Podgy McSumph had walked into my study and asked, "Hoo much days is it noo till we're goin' to the circus?" When he appeared on Saturday morning I happened to be rather busy with my correspondence.

"Now run away, Podgy," I said; "I've no time to talk to you about the circus this morning."

To my amazement Podgy announced calmly, "I'm no' wantin' to go to the circus noo."

I dropped my pen and stared at him.

"You what?" I exclaimed. "After all our talk about the elephants and the horses? What has come over you?"

"I'll come wi' ye to the next circus," promised Podgy, "but this time I want to go to the puttin' on the puttin'-green. It's to be for prizes."

"Is the opening of the putting-green to be on the same day as the circus?"

"Ay," said Podgy.

"And are you telling me that you would rather go to the putting competition than see the lion-tamers?"

"I want to see the lion-tamers the next time. But this time I want to go to the puttin'."

"Well, that's very disappointing, Podgy. And," reproachfully, "we were to have laughed at the clowns together. I shall have to go to the circus alone now."

"But," explained Podgy reassuringly, "ye're no' to go a' by yerself to the circus. Sam Doops is goin' wi' ye."

"Sam Doops?" I gasped. "You mean that dirty little boy who always seems to have a cold in the head?"

"He's a terrible sniffer," agreed Podgy, "but I'll tell him to bring a hanky."

"But I don't want to go to the circus with Sam Doops. I—I don't know him."

"But," brightly, "I'm to bring him up to yer hoose for to introduce ye. An' then ye've to take him to the circus."

"No, Podgy," I said firmly, "I can't take a boy with a dirty face to the circus."

"He could easy wash his face."

"But you told me the other day that you didn't like Sam Doops. In fact you were fighting with him."

"Ay, an' I beat him."

"Well, why do you want me to take him to the circus?"

"Because I'm goin' to the puttin'."

"What has that got to do with it?"

"Sam Doops is terrible poor," pleaded Podgy, "an' naebody ever takes him any place. An' besides," with impressive solemnity, "he's never saw a circus in the whole of his life."



"YOU HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN IT'S *CHARLEY'S AUNT* TO-NIGHT, OLD MAN?"

"But neither have you. And, tell me, Podgy, doesn't Sam Doops want to go to the putting competition too?"

"No, because I've told him a' aboot the clowns an' the lion-tamers. An' he says he wants to go the circus noo. An Sam Doop's faither's on the dole," shaking his head sadly.

"Look here, Podgy," staring at him curiously—"are you doing this for Sam Doops because you're sorry for him?"

Podgy hung his head in embarrassment. "An' Sam Doops's white moose is deid as weel," he mumbled.

"Well," I said, "I think you're a very good boy trying to be kind to Sam Doops, and I know what we'll do. We'll wait till the circus comes the next time, and then I'll take you both."

Podgy looked up at me in alarm. "But I've told Sam Doops you're takin' him to the circus."

"Have you?" I snapped. "Well, you had no right to do anything of the kind without my permission."

"If ye don't take Sam Doops to the circus," intimated Podgy, an angry glint in his eye, "I'll never speak to ye again for ever an' ever. An' I'll no' come an' tell ye when I've won the puttin'."

"You seem to be very sure of yourself," heatedly. "How do you know you're going to win?"

"Because I ken fine. I can beat Willie Pilkie. An' I can beat Maggie Stoorie an' George Merryweather. An' I—I can beat everybody."

"Everybody?"

"Ay," declared Podgy confidently, "I can beat everybody except Sam Doops. An' he's no' comin' noo," glaring at me challengingly, "because you're takin' him to the circus."

"I see," I murmured thoughtfully—"I see." D.

Jumping to Conclusions

WHEN I said "Titles are always the difficulty," I was just thinking aloud. (Many authors do almost all their thinking in this way.)

I was quite surprised at getting an answer from Laura—and also surprised at its nature.

"Go straight to *Whitaker's Almanack*," she said authoritatively.

"Why should I do that? Even if we have one, which is extraordinarily unlikely."

"Certainly we have one. It's part of a secretary's job to see that all those sort of things are always in the house."

"Is that why last year's *A.B.C.* is wedging open the door of the garden-room?" I asked.

"Yes," said Laura brazenly.

Unfortunately I was not able to think of any particular good follow-up to this, although—like *Whitaker's Almanack*—there must have *been* one.

"We've got a *Kelly* and a *Postal Guide*, and a fearful old *Peerage*, and I don't know how many telephone-directories."

"You can easily find out, if you really want to know. They're just stacked up behind the chair with the broken leg in the top attic," I told her. "You've only got to count them."

The conversation hardly seemed to be leading anywhere, unless it might be to the top attic, and Laura and I looked at one another.

"I still think *Whitaker's*," she said at last. "It tells you everything of that kind in the most amazing way. Did you know that an Archbishop goes in to dinner before almost anybody else in the world?"

The only possible reply to this seemed to be something like "No, but the butcher's dog has run off with the feather out of my hat."

I refrained from making it, and continued to gaze in silent astonishment at Laura.

She spoke on blithely.

"Of course I don't know exactly whom you're planning to ask, but I know it isn't Royalty—if you don't mind my saying so—and you wouldn't be worried if it was a Duke or a Duchess, because then it would be so obvious."

"Not to me it wouldn't." (As true a word as ever I spoke.)

"I mean," Laura said, "obvious that the Duke or the Duchess would go in to dinner first. And, honestly, we're all perfectly sick of seeing old Lady Flagge at every single party, prancing in ahead of everybody else on her two sticks."

Commonsense and justice alike rebelled at such a conjunction of ideas—but as a matter of fact I knew what Laura meant (for the first time, practically, in the conversation) and only said, "I know. She does, doesn't she?"

"Absolutely. So mind you make a point of asking her when these foreigners of yours turn up. At least, I suppose they *are* foreigners?"

"Why should you suppose anything of the kind, Laura? You know exactly what Charles feels about foreigners of any sort or kind. Besides, there aren't any foreigners in the neighbourhood, unless you're going to count the Swiss nurse at 'The Cottage'—and I'm not at all sure she hasn't left already."

"Good gracious! they've only had her about a month. But it's like them," Laura said in a kind of abstracted aside. "And as a matter of fact there *is* a negro who rides a bicycle for the new ironmongers. I've seen him. He's an errand-boy—*and* a foreigner. But I wasn't counting him either."

"Then who," I said patiently—but incorrectly, as I immediately realised, and corrected it—"then whom *are* you counting?"

"Not anybody, till you tell me whether they really are foreigners or not. Of course I know just what Charles is like, but I thought perhaps he might have made an exception, or you might have decided not to take any notice of him, or they might even be people who'd just married French counts and things."

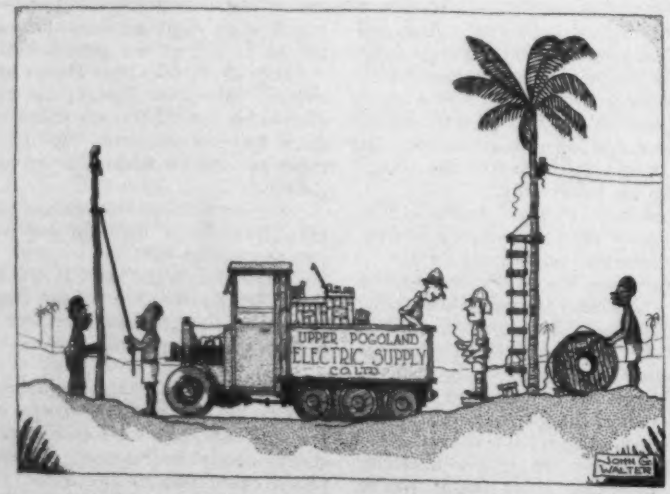
I was obliged to beg Laura not to tell me of anything else that she might have thought. My head was reeling as it was.

"Well, I'm sorry about your head," said Laura in a lenient sort of voice, "and if you like I'll go and find *Whitaker's* for you and bring it here. I'm nearly certain it's with the cracked door-plates and the old gramophone-records in the cupboard under the stairs. And the only reason I thought it must be foreigners was because you'd have known how to manage about ordinary English titles."

"Laura," I asked, "what do you think we have been talking about?"

"About the order in which people go in to dinner," said Laura; "and I must say I can't help wondering *how* you're going to launch out like this when everybody knows it's the same old neighbourhood that it always has been, and as matter of fact nobody *except* old Lady Flagge ever does go in to dinner, except in a huddle."

"Quite," I said. "And now, if you could spare the time to read a rather brilliant little article that I've just finished writing, about children's reading, perhaps you might be able to help me think of a title for it." E. M. D.



"THE COMPANY WANTS TO INSTAL SHILLING-IN-THE-SLOT METERS, BUT THE LOCAL CURRENCY APPEARS TO BE CATTLE."

Commercial Candour

"Feed your pigs, hens, and chickens on N——, and as far as the writer is concerned, good results will follow."

Advt. in Irish Paper.

New Boy for Narkover

"A son of the marriage had already been sent to an approved school for housebreaking."—*Morning Post.*



"CERTAINLY *not*. NOT TILL YOU SAY 'PLEASE.'"

No Flitch

SAD tidings are afloat. The Dunmow Flitch,
That bacon-beacon of the newly wedded,
Star of domestic fortitude by which
Those inexperienced barks have oft been steadied,

Will not this year provide the wonted test;
As for the cause itself I have no notion;
Dunmow of course must do as it thinks best,
But there'll be trouble in the land of Goshen.

Many a young bride, slowly waxing hot
With some unuttered grievance inly glowing,
Would have let fly and told her Edward what
Had not the pure Flitch somehow kept things going.

And the young spouse, that paragon of youths,
Turning a critic's eye on his fair Sophy,
Might well have dealt her out some sound home truths
And brought the house down, but for that same trophy.

Yes, in their early raptures they had dreamt
How, with that fat prize as their high endeavour,
They'd pull it off or burst in the attempt,
And shall they fail? No, Edward; Sophy, never.

E'en that dark shape, the mother of the bride,
Keenly awake for some obscure shortcoming,
Has promptly been shut up lest ill betide
When she might otherwise have set things humming.

And have they struggled on, these birds of love,
This long year through, thus rudely to awaken?
They have, and, as I've hazarded above,
There will be doings, or I'm much mistaken.

I see prompt bickerings arise. I see
Clouds of high steam luxuriously let off,
As each begins with unembarrassed glee
To tell the other frankly where to get off.

DUM-DUM.

Practical Policies

I CAN'T help admiring my insurance broker. He may be a nuisance, but there is no denying that he is a man of enterprise, resource and vivid, if rather morbid, imagination. It was easy enough for him in the early days when he was simply selling me all the standard ideas of providing for this and that. All he had to do was to *time* the thing properly and to turn up at the right moment with the appropriate sort of policy. *E.g.*—

(1) *Provision for my Early Death.* Arrived just as I was sickening for influenza. My only hesitation about signing the proposal was that it seemed a shame to take the money.

(2) *Provision for Income if Death Unduly Delayed.* Came on the morning when everyone else had forgotten that it was my birthday.

(3) *Provision against Death in Accident.* Called on the morning after I had spent a Bank Holiday week-end motoring.

(4) *Provision for the Infant Samuel's Education.* Rang me up after a day when it had been demonstrated conclusively that the Infant Samuel badly needed educating, preferably at some good old-fashioned expensive place where birching is still retained.

So far it was easy money. But it was *after* this, and after he had insured my car, my household possessions, Rachel's fur-coat, our baggage when we go on holidays, and a few odds and ends like that, that he really began to spread himself. For at that point he apparently agreed that, as just a person, I was reasonably and adequately insured, and switched off on to the idea of insuring me as a Special Sort of Person by means of Special Sorts of Policy. Reading from right to left, I now have—

(*a*) *An Employee's Policy*, whereby if anything happens to Cook the blow will be softened by a cash payment.

(*b*) *An Author's Policy*—against theft, loss or burning of manuscripts, libel actions and writer's cramp.

(*c*) *A Family Man's Policy*, which permits Rachel, myself and the Infant Samuel to select, entirely free, any disease we like from a list of about fifty things—all unfortunately very rare and improbable. (If any one of us dies of any of them then the company comes down additionally handsome. If we all die of the same one it starts being big money. And if we all die of three different ones on a Friday in June—you know the sort of thing.)

(*d*) *A Musician's Policy.* Damage to piano or other instrument by fire, flood or the King's enemies, with a natty little provision about being unable to play the cornet through loss of front-teeth or the harmonium through loss of a leg. (I was sold this in a weak moment, after thoughtlessly revealing that I sometimes play the pianola.)

But although, insuringly speaking, I may be an easy "prospect," one clearly has to draw the line somewhere. And for my part I draw it at the latest effort received this morning—the "Plus One" Special Comprehensive Policy. I shall not take out this policy. For one thing I do not feel that I am a golfer in the insurance sense. I do not mind being an Employer or a Family Man or an Author or even at a pinch, a Musician, but I cannot agree that a man who plays perhaps six rounds a year is an incurable and therefore insurable Golfer.

Further, whilst admitting that golf has its hazards, I feel that the "Plus One" policy carries the Comprehensiveness business either too far or not far enough. I suppose it is reasonable to insure myself against the loss of an Eye, or even both Eyes, when on the golf-course. One might be driven into by one of those berserk week-end four-balls. Strains and Dislocations, yes. After half-an-hour trying to make them come in from right to left I should always have a claim here. And perhaps Concussion is permissible. I once knew a man who was found lying unconscious in a bunker, having stunned himself by hitting the back of his Head with a niblick. But why in Heaven's name should I pay a premium against the risk at golf of the Loss of Both Feet Above the Ankle? I have racked my brains for any golfing accident which would deprive me of Both Feet Above the Ankle, and I can think of none. This clause seems to me the product of a diseased imagination.

The trouble of course is that the man who designed the Plus One policy was obviously not a golfer himself. He has gone, if I may say so, for all the wrong things. I do not deny that golfing accidents can run one in for a lot of expense, and that there is room for a golfer's policy. But it would be less a Plus One policy than a Handicap Eighteen policy. And it would be comprehensive in another way. Thus—

(1) Leave out all that accident stuff. Don't worry about £500 for the loss of an eye. The possibility is too remote. Make it payment of all expenses contingent upon Loss of a Bye.

(2) Similarly, don't worry about attacks of pneumonia resulting from chills caught on the course. Give us a policy which allows one to claim for an acute attack of Hooking or Socketing.

(3) I do not want insurance against the Loss or Theft of Banknotes or Valuables in the Club-house or on the Course, in the sense that the Plus One policy offers it. But I *would* be interested in a policy that offered me compensation for loss of Banknotes resulting from holding three Yarboroughs in succession in the Club-house, or which offered to replace two brand-new Silver Queens Lost in the Rough at the Sixteenth.

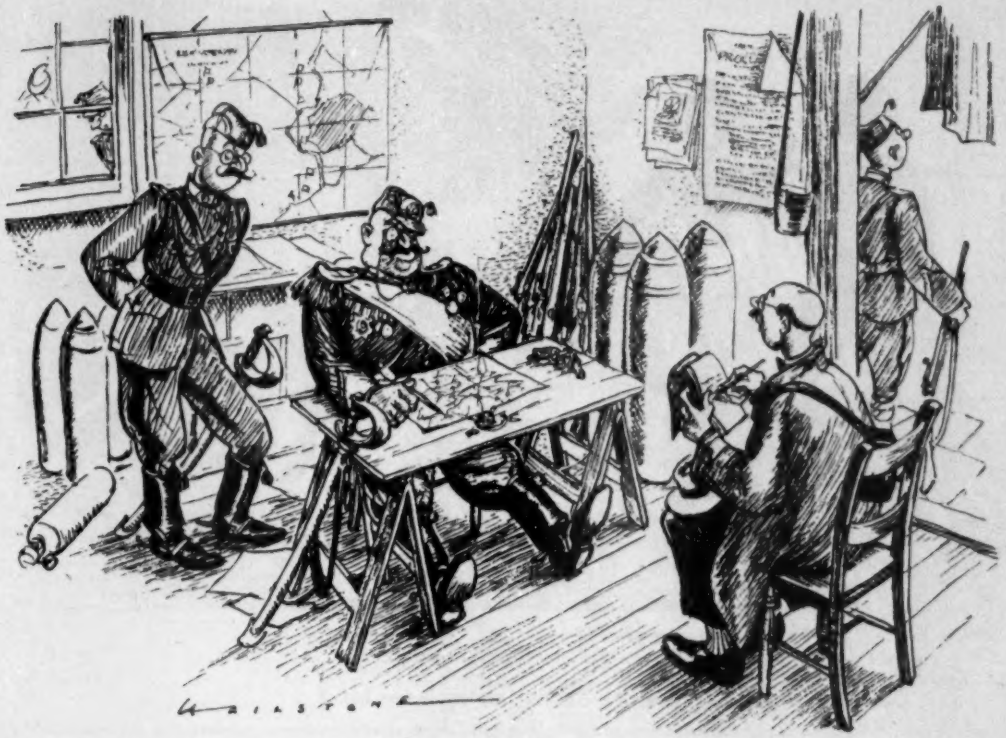
(4) If we must have diseases and loss of employment, make it Increased Blood Pressure and Inability to follow Vocation because it's a Sunny Afternoon.

(5) Offer big money to any unfortunate who is seen to hole out in one. This is the sort of accident which is sometimes unavoidable and may easily put the uninsured player in the bankruptcy court.

There. That's more the sort of thing. Produce me that policy and I'll have one. In fact I'll have several and retail them down at the Club. But all this business about Loss of Both Feet Above the Ankle is beside the point.

An Interesting Announcement

ONE of the great boons of the age is that we are able, millions of us, to learn so much by means of correspondence courses. Whatever our age, occupation, education or religious convictions, we can in the privacy of our own homes and for a charge which we shall never regret get into touch with an experienced and sympathetic director who will put our footsteps in the way of knowledge and success. Whether we wish to succeed in commerce or journalism, whether we wish to talk to our neighbours with force and fluency, whether we would like a dynamic personality or whether we simply wish to play the piano like a master,



"I FEEL SURE OUR READERS WILL APPRECIATE YOUR MESSAGE OF GOODWILL AND HOPE, GENERAL."

we have only to take the easy and direct way offered to us through the post.

It may seem surprising at this time of day to point out that up till now the whole field of human aspiration has not been covered by these courses. The omission to which we would draw attention is, once mentioned, obviously a matter of importance, a matter intimately affecting the lives of thousands. There are courses of instruction on how to be learned, successful, wealthy or radiant, but heretofore there has been no course of instruction on how to be good.

The greatest theologians of all ages, such as AUGUSTINE, ABELARD, CALVIN and KARL BARTH, all agree that one of the most noticeable characteristics of men as well as women is their failure in this matter of keeping good. They go so far as to say that this is their greatest and most dangerous shortcoming. Though the subject has lent itself to a good deal of controversy up and down the ages, we do not think there is anything controversial in our saying that this state of affairs ought to be remedied. With that object in view our own Home School of Virtuous Studies has been founded. Do not be put off by the name. The lessons are simple, tactful and suited to anyone of average intelligence. Every student who enrolls receives our "WE WILL MAKE YOU GOOD IN THREE MONTHS" Guarantee. Does this interest you? We are sure that it does. Then

WRITE TO-DAY WRITE TO-DAY WRITE TO-DAY

Do YOU want to be good? Then write to-day for particulars of our unique postal course and for free booklet, "THE EASY WAY TO VIRTUE," by our Managing Director, Jonah Leviathan, who not only tells you in simple lessons how to be GOOD but is actually himself a very good man. No obligation is thus incurred.

The following are merely samples of the unsolicited testimonials from students passed through our school that SIMPLY POUR in every day.

Beyond all expectations, and so cheap.—BANK MANAGER, Leeds.

Until I heard of your course I was ever so awful. Now I am ever so good. Many thanks.—F. GRIMES, Billingsgate.

I feel positively an angel.—"DOT," Mayfair.

Have reformed wonderfully already. The neighbours hardly know me.—Mrs. JACKSON, Brixton.

Do you long to be LIKE THESE? You can. You must. All smart men in these days have to be good. Society depends upon it, demands it of you. Don't let them (that pretty girl, that rich uncle, that employer) say of you: "Yes, I like him well enough, but—isn't he rather wicked?"

No matter how bad you are, WRITE TO-DAY.

(*Advertisement.*)

"CRITERIA OF CIGARET EXCELLENCE.

III. Flavoring to confer pleasing odor suggestive of tobacco."

American Chemical Journal.



"Now, Mary, remember—mind the cars."

Traveller's Joy

I'm sure you'll have a lovely time in Egypt, said Aunt Maud;
only, dear, you must be very careful of abroad.
Unless you want your span of life to be considerably shorter,
on no account, darling, touch Nile water.
The natives, of course, drink it straight out of the river,
but then they have never even *heard* of a gyppy liver,
and, anyway, they hold their lives at little stake.
It is foolish to trust a filter unless it is of British make.
If you do not wish to be excessively *malade*,
do not eat fish, meat or *salade*;
and remember that even the purest-looking fruits
have sucked Oriental moisture through their roots.
(Before putting lemon in your tea, for instance, mind
you remove the rind.)
With milk, I should not come to any terms.
As you know, there are thousands of perfectly deadly germs,
waiting like dormant snakes till you appear.
So here,
here, said Aunt Maud, is an iodine locket
which you must keep religiously in your pocket,
and if ever you get even the tiniest scratch,
use it. Else you may catch
some unmentionable Eastern disease.
(Incidentally, never ride camels, as they harbour fleas.)
Never, of course, *grip* anything with your naked hand.
Avoid the desert, as there are scorpions in the sand.

If you *must* go sightseeing, try not to inhale—
why, I will lend you the motoring-veil
I wore when your Uncle and I visited Crete
last spring. Oh, and be very careful of the heat,
and, needless to say, of the cold,
which, I am told,
if one is feeling in the least bit run down,
sneaks up and gives one the *grippe* at sundown.
In case you get a chill
here, dear, is a little pink pill.
Now, what else is there? Oh, yes, it is wise
to dab boracic powder in your eyes;
and mix a spot of glyco-thymoline with all your drinks.
The Guides are *very* dirty by the Sphinx,
and don't go inside the Pyramids, I implore you,
you never know who has been there before you!
Remember to gargle twice a day,
to use an ear-douche and a nose-spray.
(I know of a delightful disinfectant soap.)
Well, we must just hope
that of all the million flies you are bound to meet,
carrying various infections on their feet,
not one will actually have the nerve to kill
you. Still,
we mustn't be too sure.
Therefore, dearest, prevention being better than cure,
let me once again repeat
that it is madness to eat fish, fruit, vegetables or meat,
and that, if you would not court an untimely death,
do not speak, walk, ride or take a breath.
I am sure, said Aunt Maud
(who knows all about abroad),
that if you take care of yourself as I have done,
your trip to Egypt will be the *greatest* possible fun. V. G.



BEAUTY AND THE BUDGET

"DARE I?"

Impressions of Parliament

Tuesday, April 6th.—Members returned with heightened complexions from their brief holiday, and were widely curious, in particular about Spain.

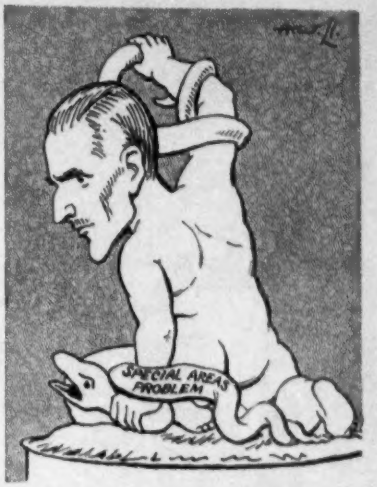
Mr. EDEN was unwilling to give a date on which the non-intervention scheme would come into operation, for he explained that certain technical matters had still to be arranged; but he seemed confident that it would be very soon indeed. A Supplementary from Mr. MACQUISTEN, asking that the Government should be in no hurry to bring back young men who had proved themselves so foolish, was received with cheers. In reply to Mr. ACLAND, the FOREIGN SECRETARY told the House that he had no information to show that gas was being used on either side.

There was nothing new in Mr. BUTLER'S statement about the political deadlock in India, and the feeling of the House was clearly against Mr. LANSBURY'S suggestion that, as the VICEROY was in the stronger position, it would be gracious for him to make an approach to the Congress leaders; but Mr. BUTLER hinted that a request for an audience would be met in a friendly spirit.

A mild storm, which blew up over the refusal of the Foreign Office to allow Mr. GALLACHER to go to Spain as the correspondent of *The Daily Worker* unless he signed an undertaking not to intervene on either side and not to expect any protection from the British Government, was not dispelled by Mr. EDEN'S explanation that the undertaking had become obligatory for journalists, and Mr. GALLACHER had happened to be the first applicant to whom it applied. The Labour Party continued loud in their conviction that their Communist friend was the victim of a foul conspiracy.

The Second Reading debate on the Special Areas (Amendment) Bill contained little which had not been said on the Money Resolution. It was opened in a very competent manner by Mr. WEDDERBURN, the new Under-Secretary for Scotland, and he was followed by Mr. LAWSON, a speaker who always commands the attention of the House and whose criticism was chiefly directed at the omission to appoint a Minister acting directly for the Areas.

Major LLOYD GEORGE prophesied that by reducing our export trade through internal competition the re-armament programme would ultimately make conditions in the Special Areas worse than ever, and in the most provocative speech of the day that stalwart independent, Mr. HAROLD MACMILLAN, declared that reasonable



THE INFANT HERCULES

(After a statuette in the Museum at Naples.)

MR. "SCRIMMAGER" WEDDERBURN

minimum conditions for all had to come either by concession or revolution, and that some people had failed to read the obvious lesson of Spain.

Wednesday, April 7th.—What a strange people we are! The House of



THE MINISTRESS OF JUVENILE AFFAIRS

"She would like to see a Ministry set up for the express purpose of dealing with young people, and with a woman at it."

LADY ASTOR.

Lords can mourn the deaths of fourteen hundred wild sea-birds in terms as eloquent and moving as if they had each been elder statesmen, and yet on the next page of the newspaper, the season being right, can be found an enthusiastic report of how several thousand hand-reared pheasants have been mown down with unwavering accuracy by some little local band of aristocratic bird-lovers.

The fourteen hundred were last year's official casualties on these coasts from oil-pollution, and Lord ILCHESTER asked the Government to set about the provision of more and better oil-separating apparatus in our ports. That does not seem to be the only need, however, for Lord RITCHIE told the House how the separator-barges provided by the Port of London Authority had only been used three times in 1936. Lord STANHOPE was sympathetic in reply, but declared that even a general use of the present separators would not solve the problem of waste heavy oil, and that the Government was anxious that the League should persuade the great maritime Powers to accept the agreement already drafted by a committee of experts.

In the Commons the Physical Training Bill was given its Second Reading with general approval, criticisms being confined to the usual objection that nutrition should precede exercise. Mr. OLIVER STANLEY'S introductory speech was a model for the Front Bench, quite free of booming phrases, very clear and of a quality not often heard. After explaining the clauses of the Bill, he pointed out that, although the totalitarian States had received the most publicity for their P.T. schemes, the real leaders of the movement had been democratic States like Sweden and Czechoslovakia. It was a complete error, he said, to connect this Bill with rearmament, for it was a natural outcome of P.T. in the schools; and he went on to make an admirable plea for better education as regards leisure, of which this Bill took note.

Mr. LEES-SMITH was afraid that the black-coated worker was getting attention while the factory-worker was being neglected, and insisted that rest and quiet were anyway often needed more than exercise; Sir FRANCIS ACLAND asked that allotments should be made more accessible to those who were not drawn towards training-classes; Lady ASTOR demanded the appointment of a woman as Minister for Youth, and Mr. PILKINGTON made the appalling suggestion that a State badge should be awarded for proficiency in all branches of sport. Let us avoid lapel-armament at all costs!



"Fortunately I have a keen sense of humour, Mr. Bellamy, otherwise I would have abandoned this adventure weeks ago."

Washing Up to Shoobert

You know, Bert, I could never hold with dance-bands,
But girls like Maisie think that they're a joy,
For they'll stand out in the rain queueing up to hear Jack Payne
And listen half the night to Harry Roy;
But, you see, Bert, *I*'m a diff'rent proposition,
For I need a bit of uplift in my life;
So, unless you've no objection to my musical selection,
You'd better not have me to be your wife—
For life, my dear, with me is one long sym-pho-ny.

Washing up to Shoobert,
Cleaning boots to Brarms,
Scrubbing sinks to Humpadink's
And Mozart's many charms.

It may seem queer to you, Bert, but it's natural to me
To hum a snatch from dear old Batch while setting out the tea.

Making beds to Handel,
Singing Choppin's airs—
These, I find, relieve my mind
While sweeping down the stairs.

It may seem daft to you, Bert, to peel a spud to Strouse,
But that's what I shall do, Bert, if we share a house!

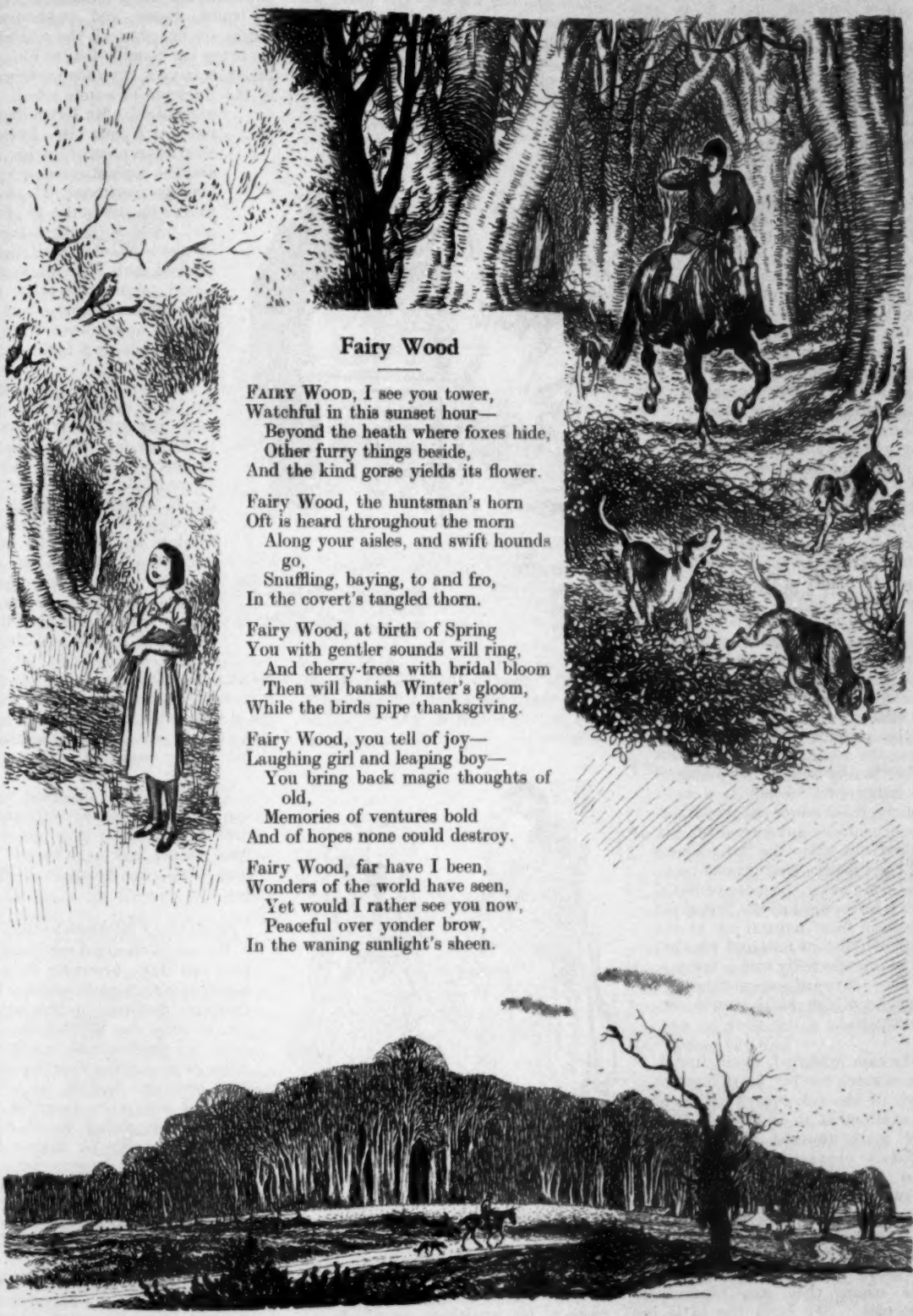
You're gentle, kind and very understanding
(Unlike the fellows Maisie keeps in tow),
But I've heard you round at Jack's playing solos on the "sax"
And crooning "Baby, I Adore You So!"
Well, if you marry me you'll have to chuck it,
For I'm a girl with culture and ideals,
And Messrs. Hall and Hylton I regard as bits of Stilton—
So now you know the way your Doris feels—
For life, my dear, with me is one long sym-pho-ny.

Washing up to Shoobert,
Dusting rooms to List—
Not a bit like Flo or Kit
And other girls you've kissed;

But you and I are through, Bert, and this is our last date
If you bar the notes of Eric Coates as I clean the parlour-grate.

Beating rugs to Vargner,
Darning socks to Glook,
Humming Greeg to ease fatigue
And help me while I cook.

But if you love me true, Bert, you won't think much of that,
So look sharp and say you do, Bert—please don't leave me flat!



Fairy Wood

FAIRY WOOD, I see you tower,
Watchful in this sunset hour—
  Beyond the heath where foxes hide,
  Other furry things beside,
And the kind gorse yields its flower.

Fairy Wood, the huntsman's horn
Oft is heard throughout the morn
  Along your aisles, and swift hounds go,
  Snuffling, baying, to and fro,
In the covert's tangled thorn.

Fairy Wood, at birth of Spring
You with gentler sounds will ring,
  And cherry-trees with bridal bloom
  Then will banish Winter's gloom,
While the birds pipe thanksgiving.

Fairy Wood, you tell of joy—
Laughing girl and leaping boy—
  You bring back magic thoughts of old,
  Memories of ventures bold
And of hopes none could destroy.

Fairy Wood, far have I been,
Wonders of the world have seen,
  Yet would I rather see you now,
  Peaceful over yonder brow,
In the waning sunlight's sheen.

At the Play

"RIDE A COCK-HORSE" (ROYALTY)

THE story of people coming suddenly into vast fortunes is one to which mankind gives an eager welcome, and many are the literary successes, from *Ten Thousand a Year* to *Kipps*, on this comfortable theme. The plot of *Ride a Cock-Horse*, at the Royalty Theatre, being so old a favourite, can claim not to be at fault, nor the villain. Yet a villain there undoubtedly is, for somehow this comedy of a Croatian peasant-woman inheriting from America a huge fortune never succeeds in arousing either the interest or the merriment that so promising a theme suggests, and the evening soon becomes an exercise in rather melancholy attempts to discover, amid so much good writing and assiduous acting, where the fault lies, that the whole result falls so far short of the success it might be.

I imagine that originally this comedy was a novel. It lends itself very much better to the leisurely developments of a narrative, tracing the effects on the characters not only of the peasant-woman who blossoms out as the queen of her village but on her family and her very numerous hangers-on. Acted as a swift comedy, these minor changes which money makes cannot be or are not worked out with the gradualness and the subtlety that would make them convincing. A note of broad farce is introduced in the first rapid transition from natural joy at the death of a distant husband who has left so unexpectedly vast a fortune, to the outward appearance of mourning which local custom demands.

The sum inherited, a million dollars, is much too big, for it deprives much of the subsequent action of the excitement it might hold if it were really thought that, like a fairy-tale character, *Anna Vraka* (Miss LAURA COWIE) was going to run through her money and end up where she began; but in fact her resources are sufficient for her limited and local ideas, for she does not move her family to some new place where they can blossom as plutocrats. She buys the little inn where she has worked, and while her ambition is inordinate in the rather childish construction of a miniature court and the assumption of the style of a queen, her expenditures are not extravagant. Neither in her poverty nor in her wealth is she very good-humoured or attractive, but equally she is in no sense to be despised.



REACTION TO GOOD NEWS

Luka Lenoff . . . . . MR. ARNOLD PILBEAM
Anna Vraka . . . . . MISS LAURA COWIE
Jin Precha . . . . . MR. ERIC MESSITER



"QUEEN" AND "GRAND DUCHESS"

Anna Vraka . . . . MISS LAURA COWIE
Maria Brula . . . . MISS MARCELLE ROGEZ

She suffers a great deal not only from her children but from her father, *Luka Lenoff* (Mr. ARNOLD PILBEAM). Her father is a tiresome old man, never content with a back place, and while some of his witticisms are above the level that one can commonly meet with in trains, buses and public-houses, others are not; but all the children of his fancy are equally dear to him. Mr. PILBEAM gave a vigorous performance in the interests of comic relief. The sons, *Marko* (Mr. LEWIS STRINGER) and *Nikola* (Mr. ANTHONY FREIRE), representing the simple and the sophisticated, are good average specimens. The wealth makes no difference to *Marco*, and while it changes the key in which *Nikola's* activities are pitched, he is the same conventional pleasure-seeking man. One expects more from the sudden appearance from the sky of so large a fortune.

It is not the fault of *Maria Brula*, a cabaret-dancer from Zagreb (Miss MARCELLE ROGEZ), that more does not happen. She arrives to do some rather unconventional gold-digging, ending in a little blackmail, but she does not meet with any resolute opposition, for no one understands enough or cares enough, while her own expectations are not immoderate, and so her part of the play rather fizzles out. So too with the local crooks, *Krsto* (Mr. ALFRED HARRIS) and *Dr. Okanovitch* (Mr. NEIL PORTER). Their rogueries look promising at first but fail to amount to much. *Anna Vraka* loses a certain amount of her money, and that is all.

The play is a pleasure to the eye with its peasant settings and dresses, and some good lines and jests gleam here and there. But here is no cock-horse to hold the town.

D. W.

"MILE AWAY MURDER" (DUCHESS)

We simple-hearted creatures who pass our days browsing from one innocent reflection to another have cause for gratitude in the scruples (or, it may be, diffidence) which deter the professional imaginers of crime from putting their inventions into practice; and if, as a taxpayer, I am more thankful that one of these rather than another confines his gifts to fiction, he is Mr. ANTHONY ARMSTRONG, who would be able to mock society more effectively with a split-second alibi than most of us could manage with three or four weeks in hand.

For this resolute killer the pleasures of murder lie not in the uncertainty of guilt but in the process of detection.

He likes to take off the lid at the beginning of his experiment and let his audience have a good peep under a bright laboratory lamp. In the First Act of this ingeniously-conceived play he says, "Here is your villain"; in the Second, "This is how he did it"; and in the Third, "Will he get away with it?" Apart from the briefing of Mr. WALTER HUDD, with whose personality it is difficult to connect failure, as the master-sleuth, and from the comfortable convention that bad men come to sticky ends, the suspense holds to the last minute.

The victim is an amiable countrygentleman, *Sir Robert Davenport* (Mr. OLIVER JOHNSTON). We hear him inform his nephew *Dick*, (Mr. JOHN TEED), that he has at last lost patience with his detestable brother, *Joseph* (Mr. D. A. CLARKE-SMITH), and is going to London at an early date to make *Dick* his heir instead of *Joseph*, an intention of which, with fatal honesty, he has apprised *Joseph*; and we see him, left alone at the table in his study, light a cigar, open a letter from *Joseph* angrily repaying a loan of forty pounds, scratch his cheek thoughtfully with a cigar-piercer, make out the legal receipt which his brother demands, and fall incontestably dead.

The poison which has obviously wrought this shabby trick turns out to be a South American hell-brew which *Dick*, as a toxicologist, is able to describe in detail to the puffing county *Superintendent* (Mr. EVELYN ROBERTS), in command, and to the bright young *Inspector* (Mr. HUDD), who brings aid from the Yard.

Nobody can have the faintest doubt that *Joseph* is the murderer, even before his boast to *Dick* of having executed the flawless crime. Secure in its perfection, he laughs openly at the policemen while candidly admitting that there is a bottle of the poison at his house. Yet at the time of the murder he had been exactly a mile away, consuming eggs-and-bacon under the nose of his housekeeper.

The smoothness of the garden-path up which Mr. ARMSTRONG leads us on these premises is deceptive. It is bunkered with numerous pools well stocked with red herrings, and its angles have been designed by an expert in this artful branch of landscape work.

Mr. CLARKE-SMITH gave a very fine performance. His *Joseph* was every inch the man who could crown a career of swaggering iniquity by bringing cold-blooded murder into his own family; in the last Act, where he made drunken advances to *Dick's fiancée*, while the time-factor pressed, his dramatic grasp of *Joseph's* character was admirable.



SMILE AWAY MURDER

Superintendent Nyewood . . . . . MR. EVELYN ROBERTS
Detective-Inspector Rosslyn, C.I.D. . MR. WALTER HUDD
Joseph Davenport . . . . . MR. D. A. CLARKE-SMITH



A DIFFICULT NOTE ON THE PIANO

Ann Chilgrove . . MISS GILLIAN MAUDE
Joseph Davenport MR. D. A. CLARKE-SMITH

The humour of the play springs chiefly from the competition between the two policemen, and both of these were excellently taken. Mr. HUDD was, as it were, the very flower of Hendon, an evident recipient of the Truncheon of Honour or whatever implement it is with which they mark approval on the Northern Heights; and Mr. ROBERTS set the law in motion with all the massive dignity of an elephant. Neither of them smacked too much of farce. The last word in their rivalry was reserved for the final curtain and was Mr. ARMSTRONG's neatest ace.

Miss GILLIAN MAUDE, who played *Ann*, the *fiancée*, seemed to me to be overacting at the beginning, but she settled down in time to give a good account of herself in the last Act; about Mr. TEED's otherwise competent performance there was a slight stiffness which he failed to shake off; and we were sorry to lose Mr JOHNSTON so early in the play. ERIC.

"£105 CHARGE FOR OPERATION —AND DOCTOR LEFT IN THE APPENDIX."
Headlines in Provincial Paper.

A nice point in professional etiquette must have arisen when another doctor had to get him out.

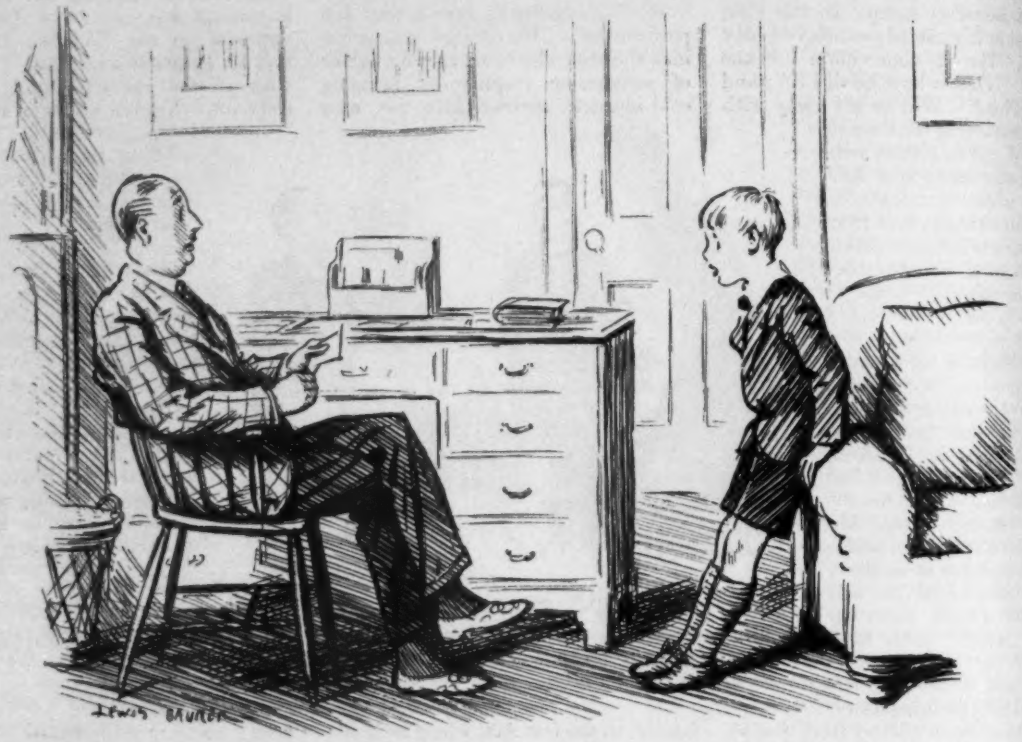
Thoughts on Platform No. 13

UNDER this roof
By day, by night,
In the grim light
So many strangers are received,
So many friends united,
Lovers and friends bereaved.

A thousand years
May all go past
And the rails be grassed
And the frog-faced engines crumbled
And the deep platforms levelled,
The girders tumbled;

Over the whole
Perhaps some town
Built up, pulled down.
Still in the air there will remain
Echoes of "How d' you do?"
And "Here we are again!"

Always there'll be
The faintest sigh
Of a good-bye,
And at the appointed times will stand
The patient ghosts of porters,
Bags in hand. O. D.



"My boy, this isn't very satisfactory. I hear you are always at the bottom of your classes."
"But, Dad, I can't see that it makes much difference—it's exactly the same lesson wherever you sit."

An Unbroadcast Discussion

(*Between Mr. Timothy* (*Know-All*) *Batwig and Mr. J. Cornelius Upfoot, Jr., the Bandsman's Bane*)

Batwig. The subject of Swing, my dear Upfoot, is being taken very much too seriously.

Upfoot. Personally I do not feel called upon to express concern.

Batwig. I do. It distresses me beyond measure when the smoke and dust of solemn controversy is allowed to obscure the outlines of an essentially light-hearted phenomenon.

Upfoot. Can I get you a drink of water?

Batwig. No. Something should be done to show that Swing, worthy of respect though it is, may be cheerfully enjoyed and even laughed at.

Upfoot. I do not wish to laugh. My preoccupation at the moment is with the Reform of the House of Lords.

Batwig. This is no time for levity.

Upfoot. I agree. Kindly go away.

Batwig. First, my dear Upfoot, let us thrash this matter to a standstill. I will not attempt to define Swing. Here, you may observe, the note I strike is definitely novel, for there has not to my knowledge ever been a writer or speaker on this topic who has not proceeded, after saying that he will not attempt to define Swing, to attempt a definition. When I say that I will not attempt to define Swing, I mean it.

Upfoot. That will make no fewer than two of us who don't know what you are talking about.

Batwig. I am aware that your ostensible surliness hides a keen brain and a heart of platinum, Upfoot. Take Louis Armstrong, Upfoot, and compare him with Anton Tchehov.

Upfoot. No man could perform such a feat on an empty stomach.

Batwig. Pray accept one of these excellent charcoal biscuits. Skoal! . . . The reputation of Anton Tchehov among the uninitiated is, I think I am right in saying, that of a man who wrote plays and stories about people in drab clothes who, when they were not remarking that their feet had gone to sleep, were shooting themselves, right and left.

Upfoot. In the year 1883 my grandfather, Corporal Callimachus Upfoot of Upfoot's Horse, shooting over old Lord George Zootle's estate at Shouting Upwards, brought down fourteen brace of sandpiper and an immature coot with a right and left.

Batwig. You surprise me. The facts about ANTON TCHEHOV are, however, that the great majority of his stories were short humorous sketches written for a newspaper, and that those portions of his plays that the aggressive lowbrow finds so ludicrously funny are precisely those portions the author meant to be laughed at.

Upfoot. I fail to see how you are going to scrape a deep enough hole in this for the insertion of LOUIS ARMSTRONG.

Batwig. You underrate my scraping abilities, which have received high praise from that stout man you sometimes see scraping last week's Pleasant Sunday Afternoon notice off the butcher's window with a penny. LOUIS ARMSTRONG is misunderstood in a similar fashion: he is taken either too seriously or not seriously enough. It is the same with all the Swing virtuosi and composers—BENNY GOODMAN, DUKE ELLINGTON, REGINALD FORESYTHE——

Upfoot. I must say that I still see no cause to emerge from my preoccupation with the Reform of the House of Lords.

Batwig. Your insouciance fills me with concern. The problem of Swing is far more real and urgent to the people of these islands than any such artificial and involved political argument as that upon which you seek to focus the vestiges of your attention.

Upfoot. You are pleased to be insolent.

Batwig. On the contrary, it pains me deeply. The point I wish to make is that Swing should be treated not as a matter of critical life and death but as a means—or shall we say a gateway?—to amusement.

Upfoot. If I promise to use my almost negligible influence to aid the consummation of this peculiar ideal will you be good enough to tell me something?

Batwig. With alacrity.

Upfoot. When you say Swing, what, if anything, do you mean?

Batwig. It is in vain that the undistinguished grandson of Corporal Callimachus Upfoot seeks to arouse my ire. Swing, Upfoot, of which I will not attempt a definition, is dance-music played and/or composed in a particular style: a style distinct from and in opposition, Upfoot, to that of dance-music which is without Swing—such music, for instance (to take the lowest extreme), as emerges from a steam round-about the rusty works of which have to be assisted by a horse.

Upfoot. No roundabout was ever assisted by Upfoot's Horse, from which in the year 1893 my grandfather, Sergeant Callimachus Upfoot, retired on pay-and-a-half at the instance of a sensitive Major who resented his inability to sing in tune, or out.

Batwig. I did not need enlightening on that point. Dance-bands in this country find it best to play both kinds of music. As they say, or as they would say if I had not thought of it first, what you lose on the Swing music you make up on the roundabout music.

Upfoot. It requires no very powerful intellect to recognise that sentence as the apex or nadir to which this discussion has been tending throughout. Further remarks, I venture to opine, may justifiably be stifled with another of your excellent charcoal biscuits. 'S mud 'n y'r eye!

Batwig. Down the hatch! R. M.



"AND DO YOU ADVISE TIN OR WOODEN HANDLES FOR A BEGINNER?"

Music and Princesses

FOURTEEN years ago, when the ROBERT MAYER Concerts for Children first started, I thought in an airy way that it would be rather fun to go to one and see what it was like. So I presented myself at the Westminster Central Hall, produced two shillings, and innocently asked for a ticket. The man at the box-office peered out through the little window and asked where the child was. "I haven't *got* a child," I said. He looked at me pityingly. "Sorry, Miss. No grown-ups allowed in without children. It's the Rules." So I went straight home and got married: it seemed the only solution. But before leaving the Central Hall I turned back to the box-office and had one more try.

"Couldn't you *possibly* let me in?" I asked in my most persuasive voice.

He shook his head. "Not without a child," he said. "Not," he added impressively—"not if you were the Queen of England, I couldn't."

This morning, as I sat in the Central Hall with my two passports wriggling with excitement one on either side of me, the man's words came back with a rush. For in walked, smiling, the QUEEN OF ENGLAND, and I thought how lucky it was for her that she had had the foresight to have, ten and six years ago respectively, PRINCESS ELIZABETH and PRINCESS MARGARET ROSE, because otherwise, I suppose, Mr. ROBERT MAYER (who makes the Rules and sticks to them) would not have been able to let her in; and then he might have had to be beheaded in the Tower; and then there would have been no more Children's Concerts.

This horrible contingency, however, did not arise, for HER MAJESTY'S passports (wearing rose-pink coats with velvet collars) were in perfect order. And when they came in the faces of the other two thousand or so children in the Hall, which were already beaming with delighted anticipation, almost doubled in candle-power. A concert is enough of a treat in itself, but a concert with the two Princesses thrown in—the much-talked-of almost legendary Princesses—is jam on top of cake.

And when the storm of clapping was over and the National Anthem had been sung, and Dr. MALCOLM SARGENT—that admirable example of a square peg in a square hole—had said (as he always does, both in speeches and in his amusing explanatory talks) exactly the right words in exactly the right way, putting everybody both at their ease and on their mettle, the concert began.

As was natural in a Festival planned to honour the Coronation, the programme was entirely British, except for the Allegro from the "Water Music": and HANDEL, after all, was a naturalised Englishman and was music-master to GEORGE THE FIRST'S little Princesses into the bargain, so nobody could dispute his right to be there.

The seven pieces on the programme, various as they were, had one quality in common—that of gaiety. Indeed they might have been chosen to represent seven different kinds of happiness. After the open-hearted, open-air rejoicing of HANDEL came VAUGHAN WILLIAMS'S Overture, "The Wasps," that masterly piece of comedy, alternating between wit and sweetness. And then PURCELL'S Slow Air and Minuet—exquisite, delicate and serene, the wild-flower (as Dr. SARGENT said) after the mountain. And then HOLST'S queer exciting "Jupiter," whose jollity is none the less pleasing for giving us a slight shiver down the back.

And after that came a fantasy, "Big Ben Looks On," specially written for the occasion by Sir WALFORD DAVIES, the Master of the King's Musick. Big Ben, it appears, whose influence in the old days extended no further than his voice could reach, is now, thanks to broadcasting, regarded as a kind of benevolent minor deity not only all over Great Britain but in the Dominions as well. So Sir WALFORD DAVIES has woven into an ingenious and delightful pattern the sound of Big Ben himself, of London festivity and country peace, a tune written by a nine-year-old child in Warwickshire, an aboriginal tune from Australia, and, to begin and end with, two charming dedicatory airs, one for PRINCESS ELIZABETH and one for PRINCESS MARGARET ROSE. Lastly, DELIUS'S "La Calinda," expressing a more primitive form of joy; and ELGAR'S well-known "Cockaigne" Overture, which seems no less representative of London nowadays than it was when he composed it, and that was when the Princesses' great-grandfather had just come to the throne.

And so, after a renewed tempest of clapping and cheering, the concert was over.

And as the two thousand-odd children streamed out of the Hall I caught a glimpse of ROBERT MAYER himself watching them with a Pied Piper expression on his face. A kindly twinkling Pied Piper, whose motive is not revenge but love; who, with infinite skill and cunning, year after year, all



"THAT'S WILLIAMSON—WE CALL HIM THE LIVINGSTONE OF OUR SALES CAMPAIGN."

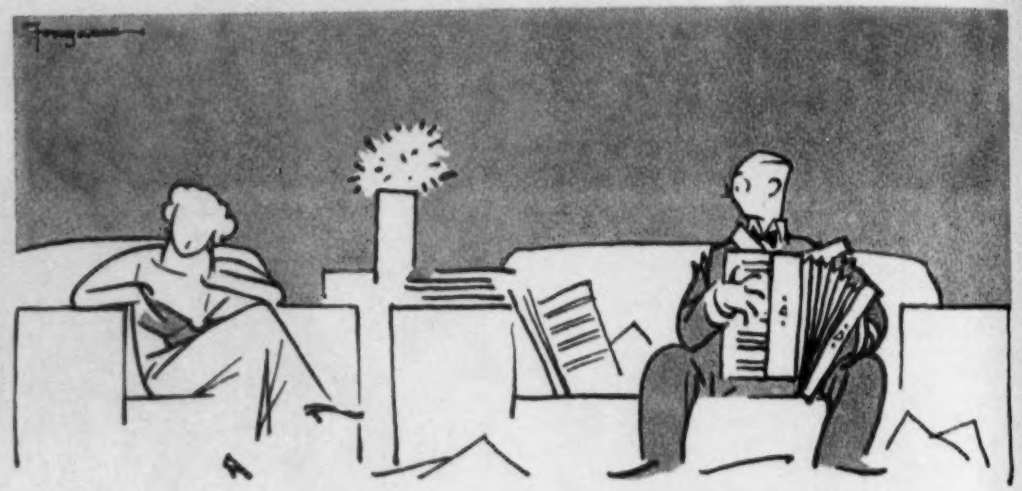


"What have you got in that bag, teacher?"
"My wages, Johnnie."
"Wages! Why, where do you work, Miss?"

over England, lures an endless procession of children out of their walled cities into a land where everything is strange and new, where sparrows are brighter than peacocks here, and the dogs outrun our fallow deer. But, unlike the other Pied Piper, he does not close the door of the cavern behind them. When the concert is over their bodies leave the Koppelberg Hill and go home by bus or Underground; but their spirits remain in the land of music for the rest of their lives, spell-bound and translated. And I for one would not wish it otherwise—not if I was the Queen of England, I wouldn't. JAN.

House Wanted

NEAR the river, British Museum, Hampstead Heath and all the London Theatres. Facing South all round. Gravel soil. Built between 1910–1914. No basement. Walls, eighteen inches minimum. Porch to door. Door high, wide and handsome. Windows big, preferably French and/or oriel. Rooms not less than 12 feet high; size in proportion. Garden: kitchen, other and orchard. Well-grown trees in garden next-door, preferably pine. Must be near good street market, fire-station and buses. No central-heating; air-conditioning considered. Tea (Indian unsweetened), rain, sea, hot and cold water, pipes laid on to kitchen and all bedrooms. All bedrooms fitted with showers. Controlled. Rent £30–£50 p.a. inclusive. No lease. Present floor-coverings and fittings considered at renter's offer.



"SHALL I PLAY 'THE FAIRIES' FROLIC'?"
"NO, PLEASE DON'T—I HATE IT!"
"WELL, THEN, SHALL I PLAY 'WOODLAND WHISPERINGS'?"
"NO, PLEASE DON'T—I LIKE IT!"

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks.)

Europe in Arms

ALL over the world at the present time conversation comes round sooner rather than later to the problem offered by *Europe in Arms* (FABER, 12/6). It is one on which Captain LIDDELL HART is an acknowledged master. He is to be congratulated upon the courage which he has shown in resisting the temptation to be sensational. Indeed, apart from its fund of knowledge, this survey of a war-mad Continent is invaluable for the cold light which it throws upon a problem that is the favourite hunting-ground of sensation-mongers. Captain LIDDELL HART faces harsh facts with a quiet courage born of the resolve to see them in their true proportions. Moreover he is not content merely with depicting the present armaments race in its sombre colours. He goes a step further by offering both informed criticism and constructive suggestions to those responsible for our national defence. Many will share my sympathy with his insistence upon the necessity for England to recognise before it is too late that deeds alone are not enough. There must also be understanding of and faith in our high tradition of democracy and freedom. A book that arouses courage and provokes thought.

Mere Irish

Englishmen may regret or may welcome or may view with indifference an Irishman's wholehearted scorn for the Ireland of DE VALERA. Senator OLIVER ST. J. GOGARTY at any rate prefers the Lords of the Pale to the antecedent native, the extirpated landlords to the "commissars" of the republic. He contrasts the overrated culture of primitive Ireland with the leisurely civilisation of Victorian Dublin, and comes to the conclusion that the Celt is the better for playing a subordinate part in a stronger man's Empire. Transplanted he is "yeast to raise other people"—what he wants at home is discipline. This is the dry bones of a thirty years' retrospect entitled *As I Was Going Down Sackville Street* (RICH AND COWAN, 16/-); but because its narrator has no use for anything so melancholy-Irish as bones, these are tricked out in the fashionable motley of literary Dublin. The fantastic result should afford exquisite pleasure to those who hold the clues and share the predilections. If neither advantage is yours, there is still an honest point of view strategically held; a burnt-out house at Connemara where "the water-lilies meet the golden seaweed," and the strange habits and attitudes of a temperamentally antipodean world.

Scarlet and Gold

Mrs. HICKS BEACH's latest study takes the form of a narrative by a lady whose name is unknown but whose presence near the centre of great events in Italy of the sixteenth century is plausibly and very fascinatingly surmised. The result is history freed from the restraint of bibliography, or fiction set against a satisfyingly accurate background, according as one regards it, but in either case it is eminently a matter for congratulation. Her pages—*A Cardinal of the Medici* (CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS, 15/-)—thrill to the splendid upward rush of Italian art in its greatest moments, even though they declare unsparingly the degeneracy of the Roman Church and the devastation of perpetual meaningless civil war. Turkish pirates may raid the coast towns for slaves; Rome itself may be sacked and left desolate; plague unchecked may leap and linger among the insanitary cities, but RAFFAELLO SANZI and MICHELAGNOLO BUONORROTTI are up and about in the streets of Florence, BENVENUTO CELLINI is offering his wares to the ladies of fashion, and the clan of the MEDICI, arrogant in genius, is crowding Italy with popes and

cardinals. The world with all its future to live for, with all its science and its faith to be worked out on a new basis, is awake with recovered vividness of colour after ages of darkness.

Small Change and Silver

It is a disability of the journalist who can be on occasion something subtler that when he comes to bind his sheaves it is practically impossible to keep the tares out of the corn. Now journalism can be as pleasant as a red poppy in its transitory place, but it does spoil a collection like *Portraits and Personalities* (SELWYN AND BLOUNT, 12/6), more especially as Mr. ARTHUR COMPTON-RICKETT, the journalist, exhibits a tolerance of clichés which the discerning author of his more critical studies austerely eschews. The present collection should delight the accomplished skipper, who will pass over fugitive and unprofitable consideration of Edwardian bigwigs of the Stage and Bar for such admirable pieces of enthusiasm as "Thomas Hardy, O.M." and "Dickens Once Again." The former, with its illuminating sense of HARDY'S Wordsworthian affinities, might well have been elaborated and prolonged. The travel-pictures at the book's end vary in value as widely as the personal and critical articles; but the happiest of them reinforce the conviction their writer shares with HAVELOCK ELLIS and "VERNON LEE," that the spirit of place—often quite other than the place's apparent character—emerges most happily in retrospect.

An Indian's India

Strangely few Indians have written novels about their own country, so that in any case a hearty welcome would have greeted Mr. R. K. NARAYAN had his work been of only mediocre quality. As it is, *The Bachelor of Arts* (NELSON, 7/6) deserves a great success, for it is by any standards a work of literature. Purporting to describe his hero's last year at college and his first year in the world, the author contrives to paint a fairly full picture of his universe. His method is objective; he preaches nothing, he never points. You can almost hear him say "Take it or leave it." But he writes with such assurance and conviction that we really have no option. We take it greedily, turning over in our minds all the platitudes of commendation before declaring with emphasis, "This is Truth, or at least an integral part of Truth."



"SMALL TIN OF SALMON AND TWO CORONATION SEATS, PLEASE."

American Humour

It would be unreasonable for any reader to expect his own choice of *The Greatest Pages of American Humour* (METHUEN, 7/6) to be identical with Professor STEPHEN LEACOCK'S, and much, surprisingly much, of the worthy work he reprints in this volume strikes one as dull. This is of course a criticism of the book merely as entertainment, not as an historical survey. The difficulty is that if something written very many years ago makes us laugh (really *laugh*) now, it was quite possibly not meant by its author to do so; and if it was, it quite possibly doesn't. All honour to the earlier humorists, who had the genius to invent the devices used by thousands since; but they are not happy in an anthology that quotes their work at length in company with humour that has the incalculable advantage—for modern readers—of the modern idiom. Professor LEACOCK'S choice even of modern work is a little strange: the unique JAMES THURBER is not so much as mentioned, and ROBERT BENCHLEY is represented by two early articles not at all characteristic of

his individual style. (It is odd to find him bracketed with IRVIN COBB and RING LARDNER, whose writings seem to belong to a period twenty years earlier.) The book as a whole for these reasons seems unsatisfactory; but perhaps for you these reasons are unimportant.

Sidetracked in Brazil

Psychology so-called has been the ruin of many a good novel, and the reader has surely a legitimate grievance against Mr. V. S. PRITCHETT, whose passion for anatomising mental stresses reduces a promising set of characters to so much scalpel-fodder. He starts off impressively with the nightmare voyage of two Englishmen up a Brazilian river. *Phillips* is a journalist; *Johnson* is the nephew of a timber importer and the son of a missionary who disappeared in the same district seventeen years earlier. The expedition has nothing to do with the recovery of *Johnson père*; but given a title like *Dead Man Leading* (CHATTO AND WINDUS, 7/6) and other indications of the missionary's importance, you naturally expect that vestiges of him will crop up sooner or later. This dramatic possibility is discarded and a violently circumstantial account of what went on in the heads of a lost and delirious *Johnson* and *Phillips* ungratefully substituted. You may enjoy Mr. PRITCHETT's vultures on the adobe house-tops, his admirable jaguar and his Cockney-gone native surrounded by Victorian relics of the Old Kent Road. But so far as one reviewer is concerned any alienist who wants it may have the rest.



"DON'T BE SO EGOTISTICAL. THEY 'VE FORGOTTEN ABOUT US ALREADY."

Swinging Votes (and Lead)

Mr. JACK JONES has written his autobiography in *Unfinished Journey* (HAMISH HAMILTON, 10/6) and has described fairly fully (and in some places a little crudely) his life to date. He has been pit-boy, soldier in South Africa (deserter and tramp on occasion), soldier again in the Great War, navvy, political speaker and author in turn. He is certainly frank about himself; after being wounded in November, 1914, he "wangled" home-duty for the rest of the War. Then he became a brazen-throated orator for Communists, Socialists, Liberals and later for Fascists. As he says, politicians are no worse and no better than other people, and a wage from a party organisation is better than the dole. Not everyone is so honest as to admit such things even to himself. His pen-pictures of his parents and family are the best parts of the book, and his plucky wife and mother ought to collaborate in a book of their own. Mr. LLOYD GEORGE contributes a preface, and in general most readers will add their wishes to those of his publishers, who hope in their foreword that this volume will prevent Mr. JONES from having further visits from the Means Test Officer.

In Search of News

Spain has never been neglected by novelists, and at the present time it would seem that her attraction for writers of adventurous fiction is irresistible. Mr. VICTOR MACCLURE at any rate has chosen Spain for the main scenes of *Frontéra* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 7/6), and his intimate knowledge of the country adds to the interest of an exciting tale. Mr. MACCLURE, as all of us who are familiar with his work know, does not believe in half-measures, and the dangers that *Jean Dalgairns* encountered when hunting for news (and incidentally for treasure) on the eve of the rebellion are sufficiently numerous and hair-raising. She, indeed, would not infrequently have found herself in even tighter positions than her recklessness invited if the romantic *Señor de la Frontéra* had not fortunately come to her rescue at critical moments. They are an attractive couple and of a courage unsurpassed.

The Book-World

We have it on Mr. JOHN FERGUSON'S authority that in *Death of Mr. Dodsley* (COLLINS, 7/6) he has made an attempt to write a detective story that is "without any fancy frills and cheap thrills." Surely this is a laudable endeavour, and although in some respects this story does not differ from hundreds of its relations, it deserves success because the author has avoided all side-shows and stuck to his main problem. *Dodsley* had been a bookseller in the Charing Cross Road until someone ended his activities by shooting him. Who then was responsible for a crime especially cold-blooded and cleverly contrived? That is the question which Mr. FERGUSON invites his readers to answer, and so lavish is he in distributing clues that to solve the mystery is by no means impossible. A sound yarn and emphatically without frills.

Mr. Punch offers his good wishes for the success of *Captain Bayonet and Others* (METHUEN, 3/6), by ANTHONY ARMSTRONG, much of which has previously appeared in these pages over the initials "A. A."

"There was a scene near the end of the Everton match. A spectator threw a bottle at Breen, the Manchester United goalkeeper, who handed it to the referee, who passed it to a policeman. The bottle was empty."—*Daily Mail.*

So the policeman gave it back to the referee, who passed it on to BREEN, who handed it over to the spectator, who apologised to all concerned for having left the stopper out.

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Charivaria

A WEALTHY American spinster who visits London every year always sleeps on the floor, as she believes that the air is purer there. Furthermore, the risk of a burglar hiding under the bed is practically eliminated.

* * *

"Marylebone's rate for the next 12 months will be 9s. 11d. in the £—no change."
News item from The Times.

Not even the penny back?

* * *

As the result of a report on this page six weeks ago that an Essex naturalist has succeeded in breeding a tailless mouse, it is stated on reliable authority that farmers' wives have started discarding their carving-knives.

* * *

A man who appeared at a London police-court on a charge of singing from the top of a lamp-post at 2 A.M. refused to give his name but said that his ancestors had made history in Europe. Could he belong to the House of Hangover?

* * *



A man has been asked to leave a bowls club for cheating. It serves him right for stooping so low.

* * *

Mrs. ELLEN FLETCHER of Croydon has just celebrated her hundred-and-fourth birthday. It is her proud boast that she can actually remember when things were what they were.

* * *

A man who handles three million eggs a year declared at the Essex Quarter Sessions that an egg is new-laid up to seven days. It might be as well to bear in mind that the days are getting longer now.

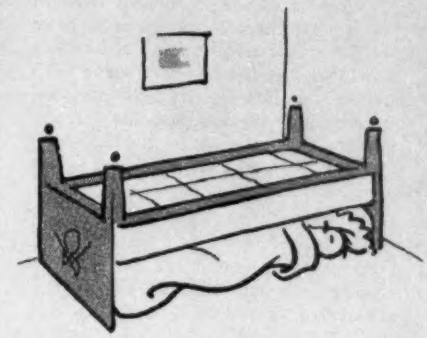
* * *

"PLOT TO WRECK EXPRESS."
Daily Mail Newsbill.

All we need now is "Plot to Wreck Mail" (*Daily Express Newsbill*).

* * *

"Dutch Expert's Plan for Fens," reads a *Daily Telegraph* heading. On Ouse authority?



An Exchange item mentions that Poland will be represented by two fleet units at the Coronation Naval Review. So we fear that a joke about Spithead and Polish becomes almost inevitable.

* * *

A correspondent writing to a daily paper wants to know if one can possibly stop an owl hooting in one's back-garden at night. Well, one can have a shot at it.

* * *

We understand that the recent flying of a pair of long woollen underpants from a flag-pole erected by the Ministry of Health has been taken by many to signify the official opening of the clout-casting season.

* * *

Menus are now being printed in English at fashionable London hotels in order to help Frenchmen to understand them.

* * *



Octopuses are appearing on the East Coast. Anglers are finding it almost impossible to demonstrate their size with only one pair of arms.

* * *

Britain's wealth is estimated to be £40,000,000,000. The average man's share is represented by the last ten figures.

* * *

An Australian writer says they often get better winters than we do summers. Well, so do we.

* * *

"Political leaders are always well-dressed," states a tailor's journal. The name of GANDHI springs to the mind.

* * *

"FINE ON BANK."
Evening Paper.

Wouldn't thyme without the option have been more suitable?

* * *

A correspondent claims that for half a century he has been associated with the manufacture of the finest rocking-horses. During that time he has of course spotted many winners.



Helvetia Reborn

(From Mr. Punch's pertinacious Foreign Correspondent)

Berne, April 1, 1957.

SWISS NAVAL EXPANSION BOMBSHELL : THE FACTS

No longer will examiners in British schools be able to puzzle small boys with the old intelligence-test: "What is the salary of an admiral in the Swiss Navy?"

I am now able exclusively to reveal that Switzerland is to make a bid for world naval supremacy. She will build 250 new battleships, 20 aircraft-carriers and 30 cruisers.

This bombshell has been received with customary calmness by the nations of Europe. Foreign Secretaries have spent a quiet morning taking grave views and warning each other.

For centuries such schemes were deemed impracticable owing to the congestion of the Swiss lakes, their alleged unsuitability for warships and the difficulty of getting the damned things up and down the mountains. All this has now been obviated by astounding plans, guarded with the utmost secrecy during the last few years, for harnessing the latent glacier- and avalanche-power in which Switzerland is so rich. Destroyers are to be launched on the Cresta Run principle. Balloon-barrages are also contemplated by The Leader, although his advisers have warned him that these would involve a policy of inflation. In accordance with German precedent, balloons will be named after the most corpulent statesmen of the Leader's party.

"And what," I asked a Government official, "of your navigable rivers?" "Oh, Aar!" he snickered evasively. "That of course is the fly in the ointment; or, in our Swiss idiom, the hole in the gruyère."

PLACES IN THE SUN : POINTS AT ISSUE

"A strong Helvetia," he continued, "is a vital bulwark for collective insecurity. Our future policy will be based on Pan-Helvetianism. We have already reoccupied the Rhône zone; but Switzerland must also have colonies. *Any are better than none. It is a question of prestige.*"

It will be recalled that during the 1940's Helvetia played a pioneer part in the "grab for the Antarctic."

Now, however, there is little doubt that the Swiss want a place in the sun.

Obviously a place in the sun within Helvetia itself is out of the question. The heat would dissolve the snow (*Meltpolitik*), thus ruining one of the country's most valuable natural products. *Intelligence circles believe that Helvetia intends to annexe the Sahara as the price of her peace co-operation.* Salt-water ports are also deemed necessary: "We Swiss," a Bernese student declared passionately to me yesterday, "will never be content with the League's proposal to grant us a mandate over the Dead Sea."

FOREIGN POLICY

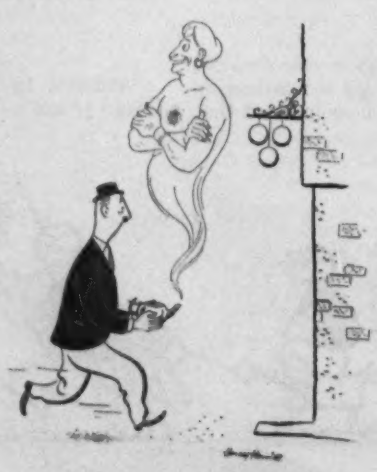
As long ago as 1943 The Leader boldly warned Europe that "the League of Nations must be snapped out of" (*Hinausgeschnup*).

By a series of diplomatic revolutions Helvetia has now entered into polylateral mutual assistance and non-aggression pacts with all other snow Powers. It is hoped that in the near future Tibet and Greenland will be drawn into agreements to limit the altitudes of mountains.

BUNDS AND THINGS

The National *Kondenztmilch-Partei* has lost no time in putting theory irto practice. *War-economy has come to Helvetia. Everything and everybody is to be mobilised and nationalised.*

The Leader himself made this clear in his autobiographical manifesto, *Mein Dampf*. Men, women, children, infants and animals will be trained for every possible emergency. Conscripted youths will render permanent service in the *Winter-Unterwehr* or *Plunderbund*. Children will join the *Jodeljugend* or *Cummerbund* (*Beltpolitik*); they will also adopt the formal vocal salute, the Swissrollcall. Women will join the *Jungfrau-Ski-Corps*: their uniforms will be known henceforth as *Ski-skanties*. All Air-force recruits are to be trained in the *Stuntbund*. Domestic fowls will be controlled by the *Eggbund*. Even St. Bernard dogs are to be mobilised under a vast Pan-Helvetian *Hundbund*.



The Swiss Youth Movement indeed is an inspiring thing. "For years," young people will tell you, "Switzerland has lacked the elementary features of a modern state. We have slumbered too long in contentment. We have not even any appreciable amount of unemployment. Until we have workless of our own we shall feel deprived of our right to be considered a first-class Power."

A NATION OF HAPPY PEOPLE

The truth of the matter is that Switzerland is now so full of foreign refugees that she is in a position to start a first-rate nationalist movement based on homogeneous race-impurity. Pan-Helvetianism is the policy, "We Miss Our Swiss" the slogan. The William-Tell-Song will in future be sung on all possible occasions of mass demonstration.

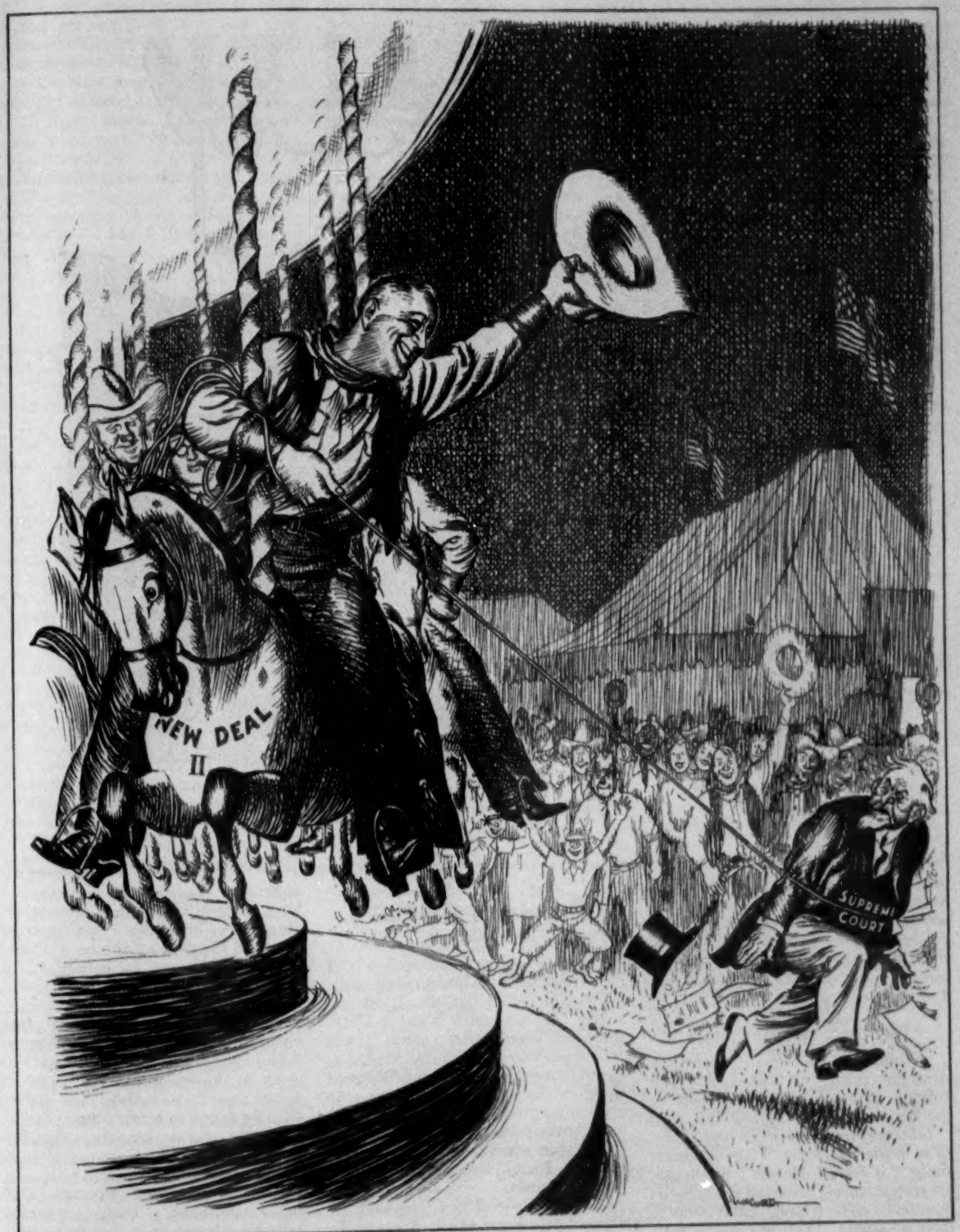
WHAT ALL THIS IMPLIES

The nationalisation of Switzerland's resources is the most gigantic industrial programme ever planned. As early as 1942 of course the *National-Milch-Partei* took over the winter sports industry, utilised hotels as condensation camps, and expelled all foreigners. Recently, however, Swiss scientists have realised that the Oberland contains vast deposits of mineral wealth, thousands of feet above sea-level amid rarefied air, snugly and impregnably protected beneath fathoms of snow. The exploitation of these ores (*Smeltpolitik*) will be a cardinal point in Swiss economic planning. The snow itself will be centralised by the *Grindelwalder Schneeball-Verein*.

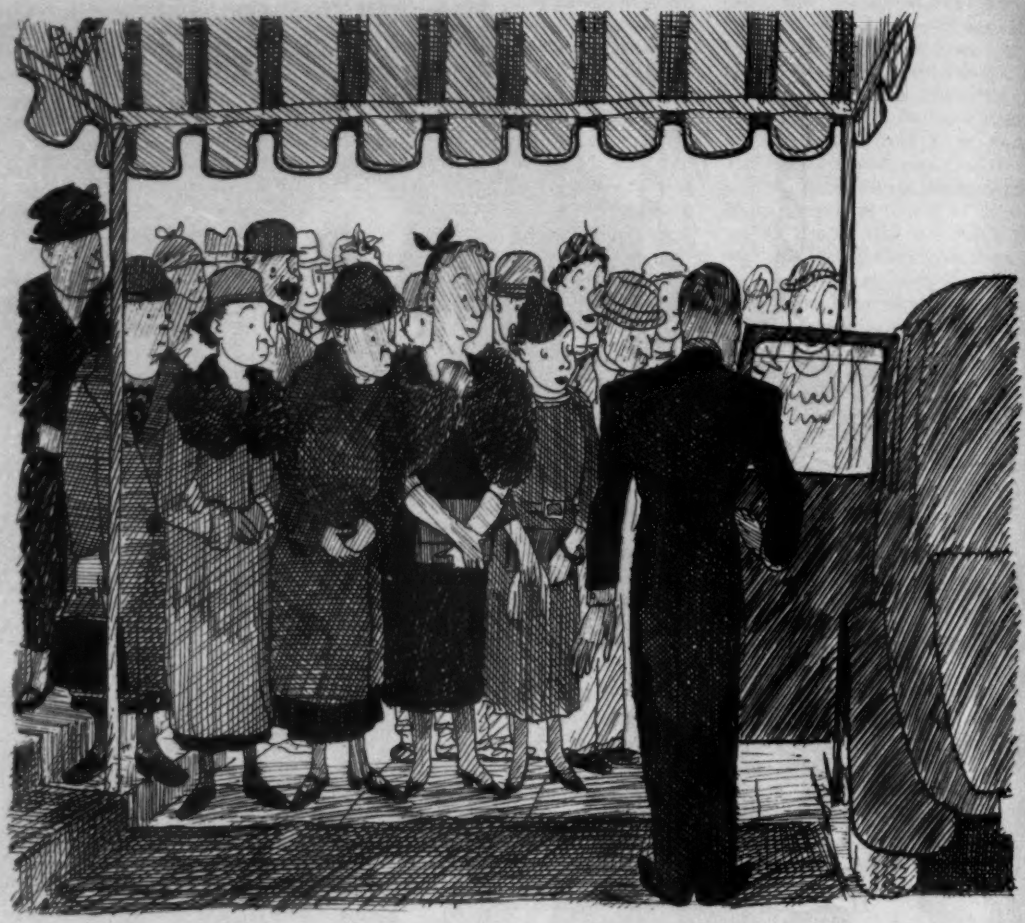
It is feared that Helvetia intends secretly to break the St. Moritz Pact (1944) *by which she agreed not to use stones in snowball ammunition* (*Pellpolitik*).

WHAT MUST BE DONE

A traditionally protective economic policy will be magnified into one of complete self-sufficiency. In future no cheese or chocolate will be exported. The same will apply to watches. In five years' time Helvetia will have a huge surplus of 100,000,000 timepieces. Although she will thus have more time than any other nation, the exact pur-



THE LINE OF LEAST RESISTANCE



THE BRITISH CHARACTER

CURIOSITY

pose of this is not yet clear; but, as a Swiss economic expert snootily observed to me the other day, "Such a policy must be carried to its logical conclusion. *Our noble Helvetian timepieces are too good for impure foreign democracies.*"

THE CRUX OF THE MATTER

"Which is the more important strategic point," I asked a Swiss defence expert, "the Matterhorn or the Wetterhorn?"

Like lightning he replied cryptically, "The Wetter the better." Then, with a shrug, "*It doesn't Matter.*" Smilingly, his Helvetian wit breaking through his fanaticism as he tripped a Matterhorn-pipe, he added, "You're a better man than I am, Engadine."

(World Copyright)

Galliproof on Flat-Racing

"WHAT were you on to-day?" I inquired in the time-honoured formula.

Everard Galliproof stared at me coldly. "I was on a Number Fifty-three bus," he said after a pause. "I was on a tram from Blackfriars Bridge to Savoy Street. I was on a so-called good thing on the Stock Market. I was on a committee of the Fleet Street Darts and Shove-Halfpenny Club. I was——"

"I mean what horse," I explained. Everard, I could see, was in one of his difficult moods.

"As a matter of fact," he said, "I was not on a horse at all. There was a time, I admit, when I toyed with the idea of emulating Lord PALMERSTON and riding to work every day on horseback; but the stabling problem is a little acute in Fleet Street nowadays." He put the lid on his typewriter and prepared to speak at length. "If I *had* been on a horse," he conceded, "it would have been Topsy from the Bumblesbury Riding Stables."

It was evident by this time that Everard had either been on nothing or it had lost. "This racing business," he went on, warming up, "the Sport of Kings, as it is called, has always signally failed to attract me. By the way, can you do anything 'signally' except fail?"

"I don't know," I said.

"I'm not saying," Everard Galliproof continued, "that I wouldn't take an interest in it if only I could. For one thing it seems to be quite a useful vehicle for the amassing of easy money. For another, a topic to which

The Times newspaper accords a whole page every day must be of more than ephemeral importance. But they make it so infernally difficult."

"It's only a question of studying form," I assured him airily.

"I don't mean that it's difficult to pick winners," Everard answered, even more airily. "The trouble is in understanding the cabbalistic formulæ used by racing fans. For instance, I open my paper at the racing page"—he did so—"and I find a column of this sort of thing:—

"040 Captain Hook (Sir Richard Roe) J. Doe 7 10."

He read it with a calculated lack of expression. "Now what on earth is all that about?" he inquired rhetorically.

"It's quite simple," I said. "There's the name of the horse——"

"Clearly there's the name of the horse," Everard agreed. "It says so at the top of the column. But which is it? Is it J. Doe? Is it the Captain? Is it Sir Richard? I know there are people who carry the name of every racehorse in the country in their heads; but to us dilettanti the only possible procedure is a long and tiresome process of elimination with a *Burke's Peerage* and an Army List and a Navy List; and even then there might be a Captain Hook in the Merchant Service, and I should find myself putting my money on a peppery old gentleman after all. All these figures too. What the dickens do they mean by '040'? When I was a boy of course I knew that, written with dashes between the figures it meant 'having four coupled driving-wheels, no bogies and no trailing-wheels.' But——"

"The description applies to a horse," I suggested, "though perhaps somewhat loosely."

"Well, yes," Everard conceded. "But in that case what are we to make of Sphinx IV, who is described as 224? Is Sphinx IV a horse or is it an octopus?"

"The figures," I managed to explain, "indicate the placing of the horse in the last three races in which it ran."

"Pah!" Everard said rudely. "What's the sense of knowing the placing in the *last* three races? Because I finished *The New Statesman* crossword before Miss Snipe last week there's no guarantee that I shall finish it before her again this week—still less before old Major Rodahead, who wasn't even competing last time. No, if they gave the placing in the——"

"Please don't say it," I urged. "It's been done."

"All right," he capitulated. "And in any case I suppose it is actually more important to know the placing of the horse than the date of its birthday—which is, I imagine, what the figures '7 10' signify. Or is it the birthday of the jockey?" He raised an interrogative eyebrow. "Or the amount he gets paid for riding in the race? Or the height of the horse? Or——"

"If you took the trouble to *read* your paper," I said, "instead of sneering at it, you would see that the figures are in stones and pounds."

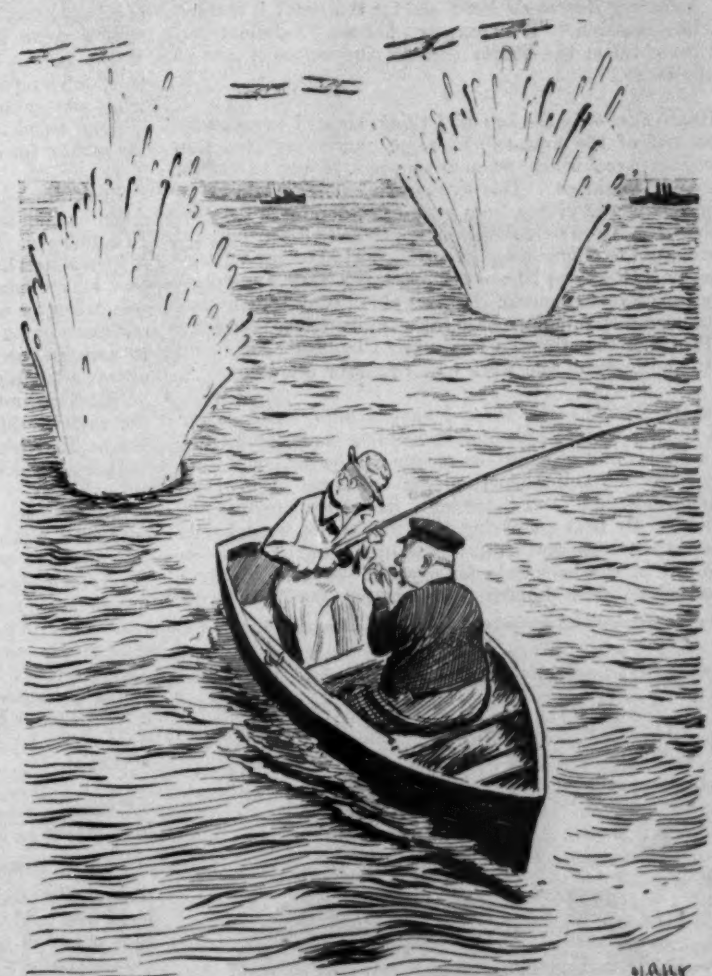
"So they are," Everard said, jumping at the right conclusion. "But still I can't see whose concern that is except the jockey's—and perhaps the horse's."

"If you knew anything about racing——" I began.

"You're begging the question," said Everard. "I've been trying to tell you for the last twenty minutes that I don't know anything about racing. Moreover, I have no intention of knowing anything about racing. When people ask me what I was on to-day I shall answer them as I answered you. When, even more objectionably, they ask me 'what I did' I shall assure them with dignity that I went about my lawful occasions, troubling nobody (except my literary agent, of course) and minding my own business.

"Besides," he continued, taking the cover off his typewriter again, "even when I do back a horse the infernal animal is left at the post.

"Whatever that means," he added hurriedly in an innocent effort to keep up the illusion.



"IT 'S ONLY NAVAL MANOOVERS, SIR, AND IF THEY SINK US IT 'LL BE THEIR FUNERAL."

Doggerel's Dictionary

IV.

BOMBINATE.—I like to bombinate. I like to fulminate too. If I were a manufacturer of aeroplane-propellers I daresay I should also have to know how to laminate, but there we enter the field of unprofitable speculation (if, indeed, we ever left it).

BOURGEOIS.—The great mass of the public—and what a great mass they are, by Gosh!—don't bother me much. At intervals I try without much success to bother them. It is almost impossible to trouble a middlebrow bourgeois in his æsthetic emotions. Unlike the Lowbrow and the Highbrow, the Middlebrow has no inferiority complex, because his brain is not capable of grasping the idea that a Middlebrow is not a good thing to be. You can't get a congenital Middlebrow to understand that anybody could possibly disapprove of him. Highbrows and Lowbrows recognise an opposition and jeer at it, but Middlebrows cannot see anyone on the other side at all.

(*Literary Executor's Note.*—So far this entry is marked "Bombination." The next part, headed "Fulmination," I have taken the liberty of removing before it sets us all on fire.)

BRAN-TUB.—At the age of, I think, eight, I expectantly drew out of the bran-tub at some unnecessary function a longish parcel which, when unwrapped, proved to contain a box of dominoes. This experience left its mark. I no longer expect anything from bran-tubs, dominoes I regard with distrust, and only such wild horses as I am particularly anxious not to offend can get me to any kind of unnecessary function. However, I have nothing much against unnecessary functions in general. I rather think the appendix has an unnecessary function. (This also applies to the Appendix to Professor Cloudburst's *Pump and Circumstance*, as well as to the body of the work and Professor Cloudburst.)

BRASS BANDS.—For these I have a mild, retrospective and strictly limited affection, resembling that which I feel for another kind of band—an elastic one—which once, and only once, a bank cashier, giving me some of my own money, incredibly and flatteringly felt called upon to put round it. By thus qualifying my affection for brass bands I mean to indicate that if one strikes up in front of the house I go out of the back-gate for a walk, and that if one is broadcasting from London I am listening to the Stock Market Report from Ljubljana, but also that on a certain band I used to hear in extreme youth I look back with an eye emptied of fury, unbloodshot and indeed beaming with good nature. I do so because it was this band which first taught me the principles of harmony. It wasn't harmonising at the time; probably every player was out of tune; but the *principles* of harmony were all the more obvious. I can't say I've made any very good use of them since I grasped them, but then it doesn't need the fingers of many hands to count the number of other people who have, either.

BUCOLICKS.—I have written Bucolicks in my time, but I have to guard against a tendency to urbanisation. For instance, once, after a good deal of dignified badinage in rhyme between Strephon and Phyllis and various other shepherds and shepherdesses, I found I had written the couplet—

CORIDON

On with the dance, let joy be unconfinéd!
The bloomin' overseer 's gone to Mine'ead.

This of course immediately threw a thin coating of soot over all the bright enamell'd landscape, the gracious presence of which I had been implying hitherto. A factory-chimney sprang up in the middle of the sheep, and Daphnis and Menalcas, who had been serenading the nymph Galatea on their oaten pipes, now appeared to be playing mouth-organs while she chose three home teams from the short list. In the end I had to fence off the whole area and let it to the War Office for anti-aircraft practice.

BULGING.—A peculiarity of notebooks in fiction is that when written in they bulge. Why do you suppose this is? It baffles me. When my own notebook bulges I find that foreign bodies have got into it—the Final Demand Note and the first summons, or some cuttings about elephant cemeteries, or a printed card telling me how to earn someone else's living by the pen. But people in fiction just have to write in theirs to make them bulge immediately. It is always a bulging notebook that the detective or the novelist or the income-tax man has in his pocket after visiting the underworld dive or the haunts of the aristocracy. Maybe they press so hard when they write that it makes the pages crinkle.

CABS.—I am less fond of riding about on the backs of cabs than was my late friend, Andrew Mulligatawny (Gin) Fizz, but the pursuit passes an idle hour and is certainly very much cheaper than riding about inside them. Cabs interest me not so much now as they would have interested me before 1911, if the edition of *Everyman's Encyclopædia* published in that year is to be trusted. "Cabs," it said, "are a form of horsed vehicle for carrying passengers with two or four wheels." I fail to see why passengers possessing wheels should have had to be carried at all, unless in some muscular convulsion they had involuntarily put their brakes on.

CAPITALS.—I can take 'em or leave 'em alone. I mean I hold myself at liberty to write

j. s. mill's principles of political economy

and no questions asked (or at least no questions answered), but I also hold myself at liberty not to. People committed to a policy of never using capitals are no better off than DON MARQUIS's cockroach *archy*, who can't reach the shift-key. People committed to a policy of always using capitals and everything else in the right places are no better off than a leader-writer for *The Times*. Me, I'm a gipsy. R. M.



"WELL, MADAM, I TOLD YOU IT WAS SURPRISING WHAT ONE'S CARPETS CAN HARBOUR."

The Sovereign-Purse

One of the obsolete things that I do is to carry a sovereign-purse full of sixpences, so that at any moment one of those small coins may be forthcoming. This I have done for several years: ever since, in fact, the late Sir William Bull allowed me to borrow the custom from him. In addition to the sixpences, I have always kept, at the bottom of the purse, as a stable foundation and as a form of insurance, an actual sovereign; and this, if, in an emergency, I ever had to surrender, I should, of course, as soon as possible afterwards, redeem. Ever since I first saw the device, I have employed it; but until the other evening I had succeeded in never parting from the gold coin. The other evening, however, having come, without noticing it, to the end of the sixpences, I automatically slipped the sovereign into the hand of the waiting attendant—a door-keeper—serenely said Good-night, and went home.

When, the next morning, I opened the sovereign-purse to refill it with sixpences, I was horrified to find what I had done, and immediately took steps to get the sovereign (which happens to be an heirloom) back. I communicated at once with someone in authority, and even went so far as to promise the attendant to whom in mistake I had given it, the market price of exchange, which was thirty-three shillings. But it was of no avail: having denied once that he had accepted it, the attendant continued denial, and the incident is closed. What he did with the sovereign, who shall say? He may have added it to a savings-bank; he may have taken what the publican offered; he may have gone to a jeweller and received its full value. We do not know. All that is known is that when he was asked if it was true that, on the night before, someone had given him a sovereign, he denied it.

If I find myself still continually pondering on the matter, it is not so much because of my own loss as of the nation's; for it proves that what the nation has lost is a good citizen. Concerning the moral or spiritual aspect I have nothing to say. Primitive man was of course a thief and often even a murderer, the social code having come in later; but the time should have arrived when this social code makes citizenship a generally accepted ideal. For many years I have been thinking all this; and I even wrote about it, in very similar words to these, after my loss of a pencil-case and a knife, both with identifiable inscriptions. But I hope I may be allowed, once more, to say it again. Repetition's artful aid cannot be over-estimated. Good conduct, in short, should, by now, be general; and the fact that it is not, the fact that (to say nothing of our crowded police-courts and law-courts and gaols), in 1937, my sovereign could, after an initial falsehood, be retained, is very disturbing.

The loss of a sovereign—as a matter of fact I at once acquired another, but it is not, of course, an heirloom—is unimportant; but what is of the highest importance is that we should deal fairly by each other, and I wish that someone with individuality and persuasion would arise to set the ideal of conduct alluringly before us. Rallies to religion are all very well; but I cannot help feeling that behaviour should come first. Good conduct surely is what the world needs. Were it universal, we could leave our houses unlocked. Were it universal, we could slip a door-keeper a sovereign, knowing perfectly well that when he discovered the mistake he would hand it to his employer with the confident feeling that when the gent found out what he had done he would send for it and add a reward.

Meanwhile, awaiting the millennium, we must strengthen our bolts and bars.

E. V. L.



"Missis sent this back; it don't warm the bed a bit."

Ode

I AM soul-sick. I shall heal my spirit's sores
With the Catalogue of the Soldiers' and Sailors' Stores.
Between those cheerful covers
(Whether one is suffering from importunate creditors or inconstant lovers,
Neighbours, noisy or litigious,
Doubts, philosophical, political or religious,
Misunderstandings, filial, conjugal or parental,
Or any other anxiety, either spiritual or mental)—
Between, as I have said,
These boards of red
Lies surer solace
Than is to be found in the Bible, the Koran, the Talmud, the Bhagavadghita or the novels of EDGAR WALLACE.

I shall read first the Index: forty-five pages long by six columns wide,
Stretching from Abdominal Belts to Zymocide.
Here, an arrangement strictly alphabetical
Gives rise to the most superb, the most poetical
Incongruities.
For instance, Anklets, Annuities . . .
And further on I come
To Batting Gloves, Battle Honours, Bay Rum . . .
Jigsaws, Jodhpurs . . .
Lion-traps, Lipsticks, Liqueurs . . .
Oats, Obelisks, Ocarinas (that's particularly nice) . . .
Poetry, Poison, Poker Dice . . .
Reptiles, Reredoses . . . Sabres, Saccharine . . .
Sash-cords, Sassafras, Satchels and Sateen . . .
Tom-toms, Tongs, Tongue-Depressors . . . and better still, or worse,
Vergers' Gowns, Vermicelli, Vermin-Traps, Vermouth, Verse . . .



"IT CERTAINLY DOES GO MUCH FASTER THAN THE LAST ONE."

After having savoured to the full this preposterous pot-pourri,
This gorgeous galimatias, this admirable amphigouri,
I shall proceed to look
Through the main body of this inimitable book.
Feasting my eyes upon its wealth of illustration,
I shall marvel at the intricacy and efficiency of a civilisation
Which enables me, under one roof, to purchase Mezzotints and Halters,
Bummaloes, Kibbling-Mills, Claymores and Portable Altars,
Nutcrackers, Joss-sticks, Paternosters, Bee-hives, Ham,
Bowstrings, Solicitors' Bodkins, Madapollam,
Anchors, Metronomes, Hominy, Basic Slag,
Twenty-two varieties of Ball, ninety-three varieties of Brush and seventy-three varieties of Bag.

I shall stare
Admiringly at the Dinner-Services, both china and earthenware,
Nine plates to a page, like nine moons, round and flat,
Realistically depicted, no impressionism or any nonsense like that.
(In my childhood, I remember, they were on thick shiny paper, in full colour,
And you could cut them out for dolls' dinner-parties; but this age is thriftier and duller.)

And then I shall browse among the Uniforms and Accoutrements (Naval, Military, Aeronautical, Diplomatic, Consular and Masonic),
Whose very names are a tonic:
Kamarband, Topee, Puttee, Pugri-and-Flash,
Epaulette, Aiguillette, Mantle, Apron and Sash. . . .

I shall skim quickly over the Department known as Fancy,
Which is complicated, luxurious and rather nancy,
And linger awhile in the Taxidermy Section, where
You can have a Button-Hook made from the Slot of a Deer or the Pad of a Hare,
Or a Paper-Weight from a Fox's Brush or an Otter's Rudder;
And if you survive all these without a shudder
You can go for bigger game:
An Elephant's-Foot Liqueur-Stand, or a Wart-Hog's Tusk mounted as a Photo-Frame.

And finally I shall dwell long, with eyes both affectionate and hungry
Upon my favourite Department, the Turnery-and-Ironmongery,
Thinking how good
Are the strength and precision of steel, the smoothness and simplicity of unpainted wood;
Wondering if carpentry, with me, is enough of a habit
To warrant the purchase of an adjustable Bull-Nose Rabbet,
And whether anybody understands
Why the things you make pats of butter with are called Scotch Hands.

And as I read, serenity will return to me again
Like a cool shower falling on a parched plain;
For there is something about the contemplation of Things—
Things visible and tangible, ponderable and measurable—which brings
Infinite reassurance to the troubled heart.

Joking apart,
I am soul-sick. I shall heal my spirit's sores
With the Catalogue of the Soldiers' and Sailors' Stores.

JAN.



"IT IS AGREED THEN, GENTLEMEN, THAT OUR NEW CHOCOLATES SHALL BE CALLED 'CORONATION.'"

The Britisch Empire

Typical englisch conversations for nordic students of britisch ways and means

VII.—IN DURBAN

Hon. Biggs. Guess what is this place! It is Durban, Natal. The sea is alongside. It is a resort, one of the most approved of on the Empire. What do you think of that?

Lord Smith. We are pleased to pay it one of our visits.

Viscount Brown. What enjoyment shall we sample firstly? Be our guidsman, kindly.

Hon. Biggs. Very well. My proposal is, we shall go a-riding by rikshaw.

Lord Robinson. We shall be happy to agree, if that is the proper thing to do, but what is rikshaw?

Hon. Biggs. It is a sort of cart yanked by an aboriginal while one sits on the inside. Look, there is one!

Lord Smith. My gracious, I never did! Can I be believing my own eyes? The aboriginal is all a-feathered and in pomp. Surely he shall be the milord of his tribal?

Hon. Biggs. Dear me, no! What next! It is the customari tog-out of those who provide the motive power. They don it by way of attracting the passenger traffic.

[*Two a-piece, they pair off and engage the strange convehicles.*

Lord Smith. Really! Not I who knew a man could tug so mightily! He pads along at a good jog-trot. I shall reward him well for such prowess. He must be fit, in good training, I will say.

Viscount Brown. He steers very preciseli. No fear of a collidal, eh?

Hon. Biggs. I am content you have been pleased at the experience. We will now take looks at the Indian Market, where all manner of goods are bought as well as being sold. Very pikturesqu. [*They go to the market.*

Lord Robinson. This man is evidently attempting to let me have something at a price. Explain, I beg you, the jargon. What is he mentioning?

Hon. Biggs. He says here is a fine wad of cloth to be had for not a lot of schillings per three feet, a good thing to take at o! what a price. He asks you to do him the honours of agreeing to snap it up.

Lord Robinson. Certainly not. Tell him I have some cloth at home. Besides, it is my good wife, Bertha, Lady Robinson, the dear woman, who usually does the schopping.

Lord Smith. Really, for us to buy in such a place! Fie!

Viscount Brown. Still, it would be allowable for englisch milords to get a few mementoes.

Lord Smith. Very well then. Hon. Biggs, kindly buy on my behalf many genuine beads.

Viscount Brown. And for me, carving products, best value, but not, I beg, over-hideous.

Hon. Biggs. With pleasure.

Nubloomingtrition

"There have been no more abused words in the English language than the words 'nutrition' and 'malnutrition.'"—*Mr. Westwood, M.P., "Hansard," 7 April,* 1937.

"There is probably more nonsense talked about nutrition than about any single subject."—*The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education, "Hansard,"* 7 April, 1937.

The chief difficulty is to distinguish the sense from the nonsense; for both are now wrapped up in the longest and fattest words. In the old days, when Auntie said—

"*An apple a day keeps the doctor away,*"

we knew what she meant. We suspected that her words contained a valuable truth poetically exaggerated, but all was reasonably clear.

To-day we pick up the Interim Report of a Mixed Joint Committee and read something like this:—

The recent advances in knowledge of nutrition and the physiological roles of the foods now designated 'protective' tend to the conclusion that a daily intake of pomarious fruits must form a conspicuous element in the optimum dietary.

That is my own work, I confess—a nasty piece of parody; but I could find you many passages which come close to it in the latest addition to the Stomach Library—the First Report of the Minister of Health's Advisory Committee on Nutrition, published by His Majesty at the price of 1/-.

Why, here is the very thing, on page 12:—

"There is good reason to believe that the national consumption of fruit and vegetables is below the nutritional optimum"!

"Nutritional optimum"! My hat!

All citizens should read this Report, for there is good stuff in it. But as they read they should be watchful for what we may now call "protective" language, the rich, lush, long-grass language which is employed in the Committee-world. It may decorate an aged platitude or hide a bright new thought: and we must go carefully if we are to detect which is which.

I read, for example, that—

"The United Kingdom is the largest food-importing country in the world, *and this fact has been associated with a relatively high standard of food consumption.*"

What exactly are the words in italics intended to convey? Is there a new thought here, or do they mean merely "We eat a good deal"? My fault, no doubt, but I cannot tell.

I have before remarked that infants and babies are infants and babies no more but "the lowest age-groups"; and students of nutrition must put out of their heads the old-fashioned terms "poor" and "rich" and learn to think of "income-groups—lowest and highest." They will then get the full benefit from paragraph 45, for example:—

"The variation in consumption between the highest and lowest income-groups is greatest in the case of milk, fruit and vegetables (other than potatoes). The consumption of meat varies less than that of fish or eggs. The highest consumption of tea, cheese and the fats (lard, suet and dripping) is reached in the middle groups, while sugar and jam increase at first and then remain constant."

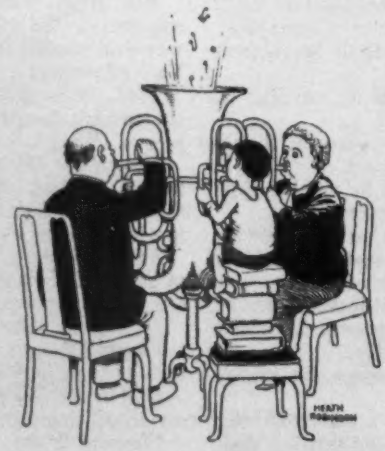
This is the climax of the famous thesis that

". . . the consumption per head of the more expensive foodstuffs . . . rises progressively with income: that of the cheaper staple foods, such as flour and potatoes, remain nearly constant, while the consumption of margarine and condensed milk decreases as income rises."

Or, in other words, "*the rich eat more good food than the poor.*"

But enough of this carping. Here and there, if the reader perseveres, he will discover new and exciting information. Skimmed milk, for example, the despised skimmed milk, which is forced by Ugly Sisters down the throats of Cinderellas—skimmed milk gets a couple of pages of praise to itself:—

"64. . . . In view of the widespread belief that skimmed milk possesses little or no nutritional value we consider it desirable to discuss its properties in greater detail.



THE FAMILY EUPHONIUM

65. There is a fairly general impression that all the nourishment in the whole milk is removed with the fat. This is not so, for *skimmed milk stands next to whole milk in the order of nutritive value of foods,* and differs from the latter only in so far as it contains very little of the fat with its attendant vitamins A and D. Except for these three nutrients, skimmed milk contains all those present in whole milk, or, in other words, all the remaining materials required for the nutrition of the body, viz., the protein, carbohydrate, vitamins B, C and E, and inorganic elements."

Hurrah, therefore, for skimmed milk!

And Whey!

Have you ever given a thought to whey? Only as a part of the deplorable picnic of the unfortunate *Miss Muffet.* If anyone gave your children whey there would, I think, be a row. But look—

"71. WHEY.—*The belief that whey is of no significant nutritional value is erroneous.* Undoubtedly it is inferior to skimmed milk, cheese or butter, but it is nevertheless sufficiently nutritive to warrant its use in human diets wherever it is available."

Sugar, on the other hand, takes a knock:—

"56. *Sugar.*—The League Commission observes that the consumption of an excessive amount of sugar is to be condemned as it tends to lessen the proportion of protective foods consumed. Sugar is a rapidly utilisable source of energy, *but it does not possess any other food value,* since it is devoid of any of the nutrients generally designated as constructive or protective. . . ."

So much for sugar—inferior to skimmed milk and whey, not in the same street as potatoes. . . .

And so to MILK—darling MILK. The Reports are increasingly lyrical about MILK. They are determined to make us drink more milk—twice as much, in fact, as we (the nation) drink to-day. Well, I have just had my morning glass and hope that it won't "upset" me. It generally does; but that sort of consideration seldom enters the minds of committees on nutrition. I find it constipating; they do not care. I must drink more, though it kills me. Listen to this about the things in milk. You have no idea how many things there are in milk. Listen.

"It contains the energy-giving nutrients, protein, fat and carbohydrates: *all* the known essential vitamins—calcium, phosphorus, iron, sulphur, iodine, magnesium, potassium, sodium, chlorine and copper, some of the physiological roles of which are known; and a number of other elements, present only in minute amounts, such as manganese, zinc and fluorine. . . ."

In short, milk is not so much a drink as a mining area. I now under-



ENTERTAINMENT

"'IDE YER 'EAD IF YER CAN'T BEAR IT, DUCKS."

stand why, after my glass of milk, the stomach feels rather metallic and tinny. Surely we are wasting this valuable assemblage of minerals. Iron, copper, sulphur, phosphorus—cannot these be used for making ships or shells? There is a surplus of milk and a shortage of steel. Now, Sir THOMAS INSKIP, a chance for co-ordination!

But I like this Report, for it does face frankly some of the questions which are carefully avoided by most of the apostles of milk.

It does tackle the Swings-and-Roundabouts problem. It says quietly:

> "It is an unfortunate fact that milk is a medium through which disease may be conveyed to man."

Then there is a jolly little passage about diseased cows and infected utensils: and it goes on—

> "These organisms, however, can be destroyed and the milk rendered safe for consumption by suitable heat treatment, such as by efficient pasteurisation or boiling."

"*But,*" as you and I have been saying so long, "will not the same heat-treatment that destroys the organisms destroy the vitamins, phosphorus and other innumerable blessings of milk?" The Report faces this question and answers, cautiously, "No"—

> ". . . the few human experiments that have been done have not shown that heat *significantly* lowers the food value of milk for men." (The Committee dotes on the word "significant.") ". . . So far as is known the only *significant* changes effected in the composition of the milk by heat are a partial loss of vitamin C and possibly of iodine. The amount of vitamin C in raw milk is in any case small. . . . It is therefore reasonable to assume that heated or dried milk or milk incorporated in other cooked articles of diet such as bread and puddings retains most of the nutritional properties of raw milk."

And that, I suppose, is the answer to my question about tea, which has never been tackled by the League of Nations Mixed Commission: and that is, "Is the milk in my cup of tea or coffee as good for me as the naked milk in a cold glass?"

"Reasonable to assume. . ." It is not very positive, but it is fair. And my advice to the Milk Marketing Board is to put all this into plain language and tell the people. For many are afraid of milk, or dislike it, when it is naked and natural, but believe that it does them no good when it has been made safe and palatable. And until these barbarous old beliefs are dispersed the nation will continue to drink too little milk. A man does not have to boil his beer before it is safe to drink; and, foolishly no doubt, he makes comparisons. Here and there the nation cannot afford to buy enough of the expensive liquid; but the truth must be faced that large sections of the nation *do not like the stuff*. And, if you think that these are the vapourings of an irresponsible scribe, read the wise words of the MINISTER FOR EDUCATION, in the debate from which I have already quoted:—

> *"I would remind the House that although a child can lead a man to a milk-bar a whole Cabinet cannot make him drink."*

The moral of it all is that all the Reports on Nutrition should be translated into English—preferably verse—and distributed free. Meanwhile, citizen-brothers, you ought to read this one.

A. P. H.

Retribution

THEY have bought the house with the grey stone gables,
They've knocked down the barn and sent it away,
(The long low barn with the pigeon-loft
And the thatch that was warm and mossed and soft;
It smelt of mangolds and corn and hay).
They are building a garage—asbestos tiles;
They've put up railings and moved the stiles
(It wasn't really a right-of-way),
And now they're beginning to alter the stables.

Just their two selves. No sons, no daughters.
They won't keep horses up there now at all.
(Their old heads showed through the green half-door,
But we shan't see heads up there any more.)
They've started already dismantling the stall,
They've walled up the doors and ripped off the thatch
And painted the gutters and pipes to match
Their hideous garage. They've spoiled it all.
They're turning the block into servants' quarters!

People to hate!
But—a servants' wing?
At the sound of the thing
All the village smiles,
For we know (though they don't,
And we'll see that they won't
Till too late)
That you can't get a servant—
There isn't a servant
For miles and miles and miles.



"SH-H-H! HE DOESN'T WANT TO KNOW A THING ABOUT IT."

Song For Ramblers

WHEN I was approached by the Woodland Folk of Hoxton to write them a Marching Song for use on their outings I felt honoured but momentarily at a loss.

"You must forgive an old recluse," I said apologetically, "his ignorance of much that goes on in the greater world outside his sequestered gates. What exactly *are* the Woodland Folk of Hoxton?"

The Secretary, a woman of obvious worth, told me that they were a Club or Group of Nature-Lovers who were wont to ramble together on Sunday afternoons, noting much of interest in the hedgerows, listening to the call of birds, and in general baring their heads, both metaphorically and literally, to all the winds of heaven. It was also their custom to gather of a Wednesday evening to compare notes and specimens, discuss plans for the forthcoming ramble and from time to time listen to a paper by one of their number on plant-life or, it might be, the migration of finches. The membership at present was sixteen and the Secretary's name (also at present) was Miss Trimble.

"And you want a song?"

"Yes. Something suitable, you know, and just a little bit stirring, to help us along when we come to the duller parts of our rambles——"

"The finchless stretches?"

"Yes—and of course for use on special occasions such as the Group Dinner. We should be prepared to pay you for it, of course——"

"Thank you," I murmured.

"—though I must warn you we are not a very wealthy club. We thought about five shillings."

I thought about five shillings too, but without much enthusiasm. On the whole I prefer to think about five pounds. It gives the mind more to get hold of.

"I'm afraid my five-shilling songs aren't very good," I told her. "Hardly worthy of a club like yours. Now for half-a-guinea or so I could do you something really stirring and suitable; and for a pound you would get what amounts to a trumpet-call. I suppose you don't feel——?"

"My Committee has not deputed me to offer more than the figure named," said Miss Trimble with dignity. "It is not as if we were asking you to supply the music as well, is it? We shall provide that ourselves. Our Miss Goschen is quite gifted on the piano."

"Bong! Bong! Bong!"

"Young man!"

"It's quite all right," I said hastily. "I was only thinking. Listen:

Bong! Bong! Bong!
See us march along,
The Woodland Folk of Hoxton,
Sixteen strong!

How would that do for a refrain?"

The Secretary considered it. "It's cheerful," she admitted, "and easy to remember. But I'm afraid—you see, though we are very keen, we cannot all of us always manage to turn out for the rambles. So the last line wouldn't be right, would it?"

"No matter," I said cheerfully. "You can alter it to suit the occasion. 'Fourteen' or 'Fifteen' fits the metre just as well."

"Supposing there were only twelve of us?"

I saw her point at once. "Twelve" would be weak. Though I must say a Club which is going to get a Marching



"As a matter of fact I generally hunt with the Belvoir."
"Why? Do they go slower than foxes?"

Song for five shillings might surely have the decency to turn out more than seventy-five per cent. of its members to sing the thing.

"And there's another thing that ought really to be made clear," Miss Trimble went on. "You see, we aren't Hoxton people at all in a sense; we mostly live near Streatham. We took the name for sentimental reasons."

"I see," I said, not wishing to probe too deeply.

"So if you *could* bring that point out in the song it would be nice."

"Well, let's leave the refrain for the moment," I said desperately, "and try the verse. Now, Muse——

Tum-tumte-tumte-tumte-rife,
We trail the trailing celandine,
And all that's best of woodland life
Meets in our note-books and our eyen."

"Ine?"

"E-Y-E-N—an old poetic plural of eye, favoured by Chaucer and others of his kine—I mean ilk."

"Shouldn't it be a dissyllable?"

"Not in a five-shilling song," I said sternly. "However, if you don't like that I could give you—

Merrily, merrily, list to the bullfinches!
Scramble through bramble, come on, girls, and o'er!
Don't miss the southistle,
Hogweed and cow-missel,
Mugwort and bogwort and old hellebore."

The Secretary frowned thoughtfully.

"Cow-missel?" she said. "Cow-missel? I don't think I know it. You aren't thinking of cow-*parsley* by any chance?"

"Certainly not. It's not a plant, it's a bird—a kind of female thrush. Bull*finches* and cow-*missels*, if you see my point. One gets the poetical contrast there."

"I don't really think——"

"Ah," I said, waving her down, "I see what it is. You think the rhyme's a bit weak. *Thistle* and *missel*. I admit it. It *is* weak. But after all what's a weak rhyme in a song? Thingummy had hundreds of them. Still, I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll knock something off for it. Four-and-sixpence and the thing's yours."

"Only *one* verse?"

"All right, then," I said, "if you want another verse, you shall have it.

Woodland Folk, Woodland Folk, take up your panicles—

(kind of small rush baskets used by botanists, Miss Trimble)—

Woodland Folk, Woodland Folk, take up your panicles,
Fill them with dodder and madder and rue.
Surely there's not any
Plant known to Botany
That could be dodder or madder than you?"

The Secretary rose to her full height. "Are you trying to be insulting, Sir?" she asked.

"Hard," I said.

H. F. E.



"NOW, YOUR GRANDFATHER, 'E WERE A PROPER GENTLEMAN. E'D COME INTO THE GARDEN OF A MORNIN' AND TAKE NO MORE NOTICE OF ME THAN IF I WERE A WORM."

Bridge Interlude

It was the woman in the purple dress
  Who leaned across the table with a frown
And said, "If you had taken the finesse
  We should not have been seven hundred down."

Remembering that Manners Makyth Man,
  I answered her in accents bland and mild,
"Quite so; but come, deny it if you can,
  Your calling was a little weird and wild."

A thunder-cloud still stood upon her brow.
  "Thank-you," she cried, "I do know how to call;
But if I had anticipated how
  You'd play the hand, I'd not have bid at all."

Once more I tried to turn her wrath away,
  Murmuring gently, "There's no need to shout.
You'll find bridge easier the more you play;
  In time you'll get the hang of it, no doubt."

Alas for human frailty! Even then
  The wretched woman did not seem appeased;
She sat there looking like an angry hen,
  Or like a monkey that some child has teased.

"What is the use," I thought, "of courtesy?
  She cannot play the hand, she cannot bid,
Yet she adversely criticises me!
  I'll tell her what she looks like." And I did.

A. W. B.

In a Good Cause

"The Friends of the Poor" are holding their Annual Ball on Monday, May 3rd, at 53 Princes Gate, S.W.7. There will be dancing from 10 to 3. Tickets at Two Guineas each, or Family Tickets, six for Ten guineas, can be obtained from The Friends of the Poor, 42 Ebury Street, S.W.1 (Sloane 8263), where, as funds are urgently needed, donations from those unable to take tickets will also be welcomed.

The Right Chaps for Damming

"Several 50-ton barges laden with clay were wedged across the opening."—*Daily Telegraph.*

"We thank you for your letter of to-day's date, together with the shirt. We find upon checking the sleeve measurement that our cutting rooms have cut these considerably longer than the measurements given, which very largely accounts for the sleeves being too long."—*Letter from Outfitter.*

Ah! One wondered if it could be that.



LAST BUT NOT LEAST

OR, THE ARAB'S FAREWELL TO HIS STEED

THE CHANCELLOR (*to the Taxpayer*). "GOOD-BYE, OLD FRIEND! YOU'VE NEVER FAILED ME YET, AND I HOPE YOUR NEXT MASTER WILL BE AS FOND OF YOU AS I HAVE BEEN."

Impressions of Parliament

Synopsis of the Week

***Monday, April 12th.*—Commons: Debate on Ministers' Salaries.**

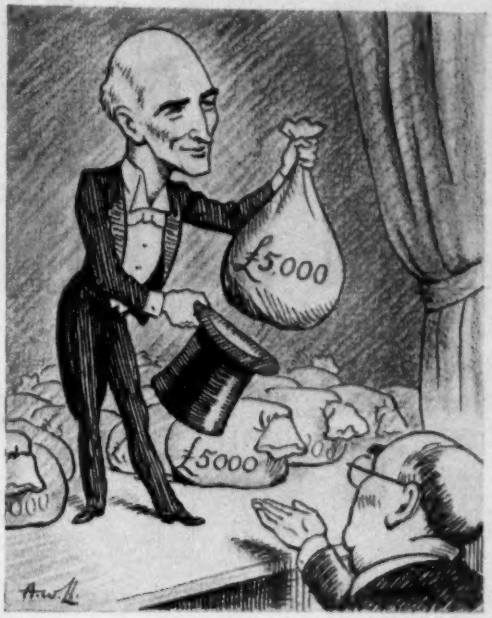
***Tuesday, April 13th.*—Commons: Debates on Sterilisation of the Unfit and Malnutrition.**

***Wednesday April 14th.*—Lords: Debate on Food Supplies in War.**

Commons: Debate on Bilbao Situation.

Monday, April 12th.—Mr. BALDWIN'S refusal to answer hypothetical questions about the Government's attitude to British ships risking an entry into the port of Bilbao roused the Opposition to give notice that they would ask for a discussion of the subject.

It is not at all easy to assess the merits of a Cabinet Minister in terms of money. Clearly he cannot expect to be paid at the highest rates of commerce or the professions, but on the other hand he is doing a big job and is seldom in politics entirely for philanthropy. With one exception, the Ministers of the Crown Bill does not increase the top standard salary of £5,000, which it must be remembered was fixed at a time of small taxation when the pound was worth much more than it is to-day; but it allows it to several badly-paid Ministers whose offices have advanced in importance, and automatically to any Minister within the Cabinet. The exception is the Prime Minister, to whom it gives £10,000, and it also allows a pension of £2,000 to ex-Prime Ministers and a salary of £2,000 to the Leader of the Opposition.



Private Member (to Sir JOHN SIMON). "CAN'T YOU SPARE A COPPER, GUV'NOR?"

In moving its Second Reading, Sir JOHN SIMON pointed out that it contained the first reference in the history of the British Constitution to the Cabinet and Cabinet Ministers.

The reaction of the House to it was interesting. Mr. GREENWOOD, for the Labour Party, accepted the principle of a salary for the Leader of the Opposition, saying that he regarded it as a challenge to Fascism; the removal of anomalies he also approved, but he felt that there was no excuse for an increase in the total charges, which might have been avoided by the abolition of the Law Officers' fees, and he urged that Ministers' functions should be rationalised before their salaries.

The Liberal attitude was one of even sterner economy, Sir ARCHIBALD SINCLAIR declaring that £4,000 should be the maximum for all but a few posts.

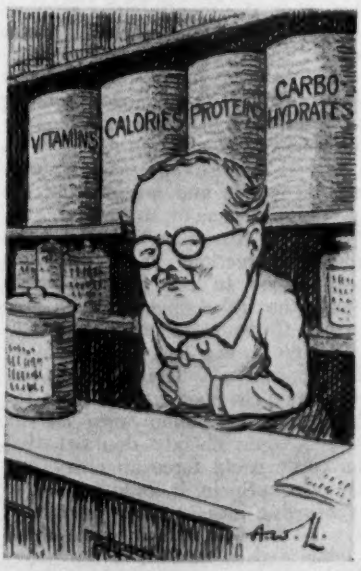
As for Mr. MAXTON, he frankly doubted if the intellectual gulf between the Back Benches and the Treasury Bench was accurately stated by the ratio of 400 : 5,000, and, dismissing as nonsense the argument that Ministers were crushed by the expenses of hospitality, described how the only Ministerial invitation bar one which he had received in his whole career was to look through a window at the Trooping of the Colour.

In other speeches, which pretty evenly reflected both sides of the case, there was so much demand that private Members' salaries should be raised that when Mr. BALDWIN wound up the debate he promised to make a personal investigation.

Tuesday, April 13th.—A day of miscellaneous debate, dull except for a discussion on the sterilisation of the unfit, sponsored in a convincing speech by Wing-Commander JAMES.

He asked Members who had never visited a mental hospital to do so, and he reminded them that most of the cases they would see would be hereditary, and so avoidable. Only voluntary sterilisation was suggested, a Departmental Committee had already recommended its legalisation in certain cases, and various medical bodies, including the Royal Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons, had given it their approval. Sir FRANCIS ACLAND supported him.

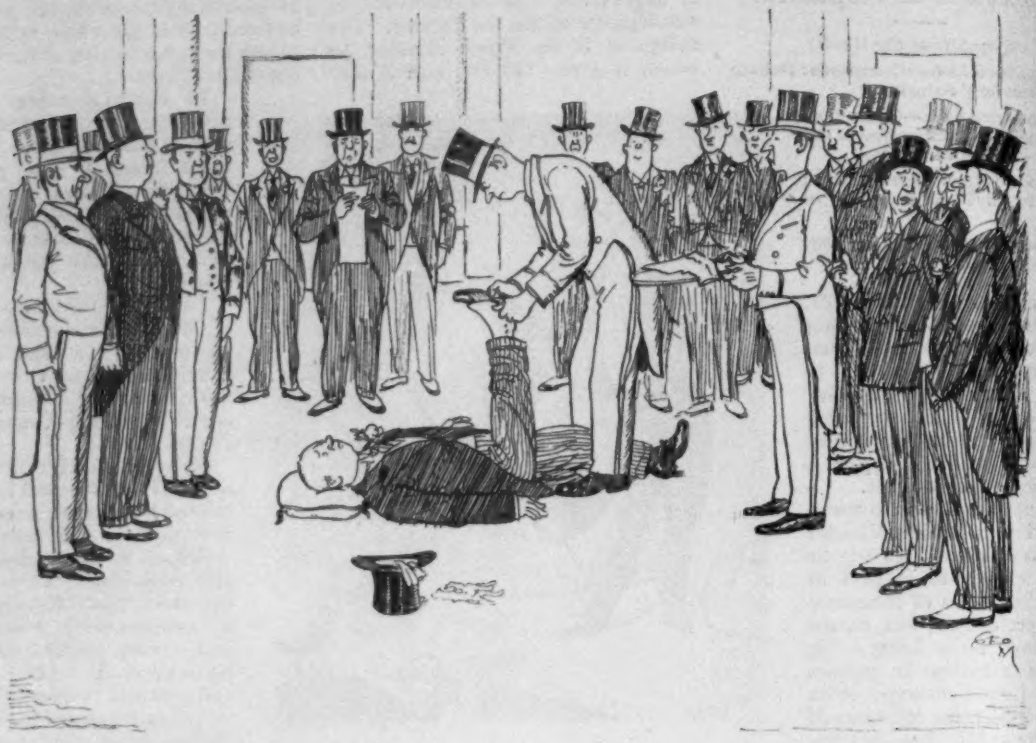
Opposition came mainly from Mr. LOGAN, who put the orthodox view of the Churches that the human race



THE NUTRITION SHOP
Proprietor, SIR KINGSLEY WOOD



A CASTLE IN SPAIN
"ALAS, IT IS ONLY A DAY-DREAM!"
Mr. CHURCHILL.



COMMON SCENE IN THE CITY

THE DESPATTING OF AN UNFORTUNATE MEMBER OF THE STOCK EXCHANGE ON CONTANGO DAY.

should multiply freely even at the cost of its quality, and from Mr. PRITT, who side-tracked the issue by demanding that the prime causes of insanity, such as malnutrition and bad housing, should be first attacked; and after several speeches in agreement with the motion, Sir KINGSLEY WOOD suspended judgment on the ground that public opinion should be allowed to develop still further. This is likely to remain the official attitude for as long as the Government dares postpone its approval, which might so easily be turned into a damaging election-cry.

Wednesday, April 14th.—Lord TEMPLEMORE was able to tell their Lordships, who have been taking things very easily this week, that enough wheat was being kept in the country to last at least three months, and that a Food Defence Plans Department had been set up at the Board of Trade.

The Labour Party's motion of censure on the Government for its action in warning British ships not to enter the Basque port of Bilbao was debated with considerable warmth and interruption, and was remarkable for Socialist anxiety to run risks which might break up the whole principle of non-intervention and for a thoroughly



OUR BACK-BENCH *WHO'S WHO*

Mr. WALKDEN's early days
Were passed by the permanent ways.
Now he has joined the nation's keepers
Because he couldn't stay away from
the buffers and sleepers.

sensible speech from Mr. CHURCHILL, in which he urged the importance of this country maintaining absolute neutrality in "this dismal Spanish welter."

Mr. ATTLEE made out that by preventing British ships from running the insurgents' blockade with food for the women and children of Spain we were assisting FRANCO, showing ourselves cowards and encouraging the aggressive dreams of MUSSOLINI.

Sir JOHN SIMON replied that when similar instructions had been given last autumn to British shipping to avoid the rebel ports which the Spanish Government's fleet was blockading, no protest had been made by the Opposition. The British Commander on the spot reported that the approaches to Bilbao were heavily mined; while nobody doubted that the Navy could force an entry into any port in Spain, it could only do so by bringing into action a great fleet of mine-sweepers, which would entail a definite abandonment of the policy of non-intervention. At the same time, he told the House, General FRANCO had been directly informed that no

interference with British shipping on the high seas would be tolerated.

Sir ARCHIBALD SINCLAIR violently accused the Government of retreating in the face of dictators' threats, and Mr. MAXTON agreed, saying that we were grovelling before a pirate. But Mr. CHURCHILL defended rigid non-intervention as representing at any rate the shadow of the Concert of Europe, and Mr. EDEN said that as a man responsible for the lives of millions of people he was not much moved by taunts of cowardice. Undoubtedly by this time the Conservative Party has cleared itself from the old taunt of Jingoism—at least so far as Mediterranean waters are concerned.

Missing

A COUPLE of years ago, when I was ill, I actually made a catalogue of my library, the sort of job that is much too much like work to attract me when I am well. Soon afterwards the catalogue disappeared, but when we moved the big desk the other day Edith found it under one of the legs, where it had been placed to prevent the desk wobbling.

"Let's go through the catalogue," said Edith, "and see how many books are missing. I should think that you will find that at least ten per cent. have been borrowed and not returned. Everybody in the village seems to regard this place as a sort of branch of the public library."

It happened to be a wet afternoon, so we set to work, and in a couple of hours discovered that Edith's estimate was not far out.

"It's *too* bad," I said. "There are altogether ninety books missing, and on the credit side all we have to show is a very battered *Three Men in a Boat* belonging to Entwistle and a *Place-Names in Their Historical Setting* which appears to belong to the Vicar, though I'm quite certain I never borrowed it."

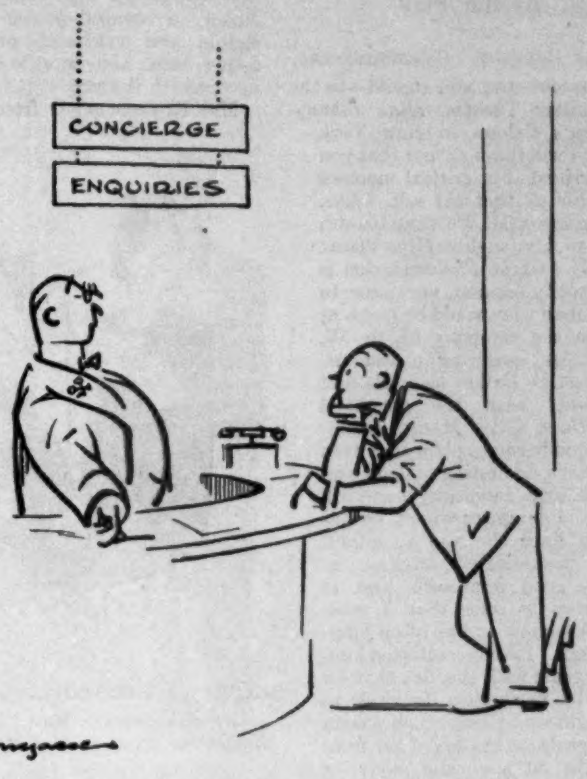
Edith sighed. "If only we had kept a record of people who borrowed books," she said, "we should simply have to send them a list and ask for their early return; but as it is the best you can do is to write to everybody enclosing a list of the missing books and asking them if they have got any of them. They will then glance along their shelves and pick out any with your name in them."

"But most of them haven't got my name in," I said sadly. "I rarely write my name in a book because I have always intended some day to design a book-plate and have it printed. A book-plate is so much neater than an inky scrawl, and in devising it one can use up some of the Latin that one's parents purchased for one at great expense."

"Of course probably the whole ninety haven't been borrowed," said Edith. "You have to make some allowance for books you have discarded owing to their advanced stage of decomposition, and others that you have left in the train. I think it would be a good idea to go through the list and pick out half-a-dozen titles that you *really* want back, and then write a bullying sort of letter to all your friends saying that you clearly remember lending the books to them, and will they kindly return them with any others they've got."

So we drafted the following letter and sent copies to all our book-borrowing friends: "DEAR . . . . ,—Checking my library catalogue, I find that the following books are marked as having been lent to you during the past couple of years: *In Chancery*, *Boswell's Johnson* (Vol. I.), *The Benson Murder Case*, *Poems of Bret Harte*, *The Wrecker* and *A Dominie's Log*. Their early return, with any others of mine you may have, would oblige."

The response was extremely good, which just shows that people are much more honest than they look. Within a week we had received four copies of *In Chancery* and at least two of each of the others, except *Boswell's Johnson*, of which we only received a complete pocket edition and an odd Vol. II. with no cover, which Johnson-Clitheroe said he would pay for rebinding if it had a cover when we lent it to him. Quite a lot of other books also arrived, most of which were not in our catalogue at all, and it was when we went to arrange them on the shelves that we remembered the shelf over the door, which we had overlooked when we checked the catalogue. All the six books for which we had written were there, except *The Wrecker*, which Edith suddenly recollected I had dropped in the bath in the spring of '36 and jettisoned owing to its peculiar shape when it dried.



"HALL-PORTER, YOU KNOW EVERYTHING—HAVE YOU ANY IDEA HOW I COULD GET HOLD OF A HALL-PORTER?"

At the Play

"ANNA CHRISTIE" (WESTMINSTER)

IF you go—and you should—to the Westminster Theatre, *alias Johnny-the-Priest's* Saloon in New York City, you will think at first that you have arrived at a critical moment in the life of that old salt, *Chris. Christopherson* (Mr. EDWARD RIGBY) and *Anna*, his daughter (Miss FLORA ROBSON). *Chris. Christopherson* is a fine stocky seaman, very true to type, a man who would be much at home in the company of Mr. W. W. JACOBS' seafaring characters. So at least he strikes us in his first conviviality with the delightful *Marty Owen* (Miss MARIE AULT); but it soon becomes plain that even sailors have domestic problems and that at any moment there will arrive the daughter whom he has not seen since she was an infant. He is pathetically anxious to make a good impression and to have more to offer than a coal-barge as a home and an often bibulous parent. He has comforted himself for years with the idea that by leaving his motherless daughter to be brought up by cousins on a farm in Minnesota he has saved her from the perils to soul and body of the life of the sea both for men and for the women who marry them. But when *Anna* arrives she is no simple country girl but a rather bitter "woman of the town," and before very long it is quite plain that, for all the apparent momentousness of the reunion of father and daughter, this is not really a play of events.

EUGÈNE O'NEILL is heir to much of the IBSEN tradition, and the play recalls IBSEN'S *Lady from the Sea*. Here the sea which so possesses the mind of the old skipper is a symbol for a whole way of life—that of the restless searchers after sensation, the improvident livers from hand to mouth. The farm in Minnesota has lived for years in the mind of the skipper, standing for the other way of life of which he has no real knowledge, for the ideal safe and rooted existence. But his daughter inherits his blood and is restless and unhappy until she gets back to the sea. In her earlier speeches the refrain of restlessness keeps recurring, and the new way of life soon produces for her in *Mat Burke* (Mr. NIALL MACGINNIS) the first love of her life. He is a fierce stoker, a boastful young Irishman, simple and vehement, and *Anna's* father hates him because he is connected with the sea.

Miss ROBSON moves from the quiet



RETURN OF THE PRODIGAL DAUGHTER

Anna Christopherson . . Miss FLORA ROBSON
Marty Owen . . . . . Miss MARIE AULT

reaches of the first two Acts, where *Anna* is debilitated and only slowly recovering her health, to the high passions of the Third and Fourth Acts. There are few actresses to-day who give such an impression of complete intellectual grasp of the parts they are portraying, and with Miss ROBSON on the stage we feel immense confidence, and are right to feel it. The dramatist knows that she will miss nothing he has intended. For the part of *Anna Christie*, who is a limited girl, her father's daughter in nothing more than her lack of calculation or management, Miss ROBSON finds it a little difficult to be sufficiently unintellectual. From *Anna's* first appearance it seems to us a little incongruous that anybody of such obvious spiritual and intellectual quality should have made so little of her life. When we understand what the sea represents we know that there can be no finality to this play, and lovers' quarrels and happy endings are the merest episodes, for *Anna*, like her father, belongs to a family destined to the sorrows and uncertainties of the unanchored life.

Very appropriately the "happy ending" itself takes place on the eve of the departure of both husband and father for a long voyage to Capetown. By the skill of the dramatist we only learn this gradually and as the play proceeds, and the gripping stormy scenes, the crescendoes of the Third Act, do not suffer from it.

But in retrospect it is plain how the play changes in the course of its four Acts as they gradually become more definite and clear and dominating.

The acting in this very well cast Westminster production is excellent and excellently balanced. Miss ROBSON'S powerful hold of the central unhappy figure is offset by the whimsical broken English in which Mr. RIGBY shows us a seafaring man who has no touch of exaggeration or caricature; and Mr. MACGINNIS can be the Irish stoker alike in his Sunday suit and manners and when seized by a sudden passion as a raging and primitive man. D. W.



HOW TO ELIMINATE A WOULD-BE SON-IN-LAW

Mat Burke . . . . . Mr. NIALL MACGINNIS
Chris. Christopherson . Mr. EDWARD RIGBY

"LONDON AFTER DARK" (APOLLO)

Mr. WALTER HACKETT shakes a very neat cocktail of light comedy and melodrama, in the proportion of about two to one. It is dry, strong, nicely coloured and served, and may be said to be quick in its desired effect.

His capacity for discovering fresh situations which will give Miss MARION LORNE reasonable

cause for alarm seems infinite, and his dialogue is skilfully arranged to set off her highly-individual technique of twitter and dither; but I confess that I wish I could feel this to be more consistently funny. It is not that I fail to appreciate the force of her personality or the admirable perfection of her timing; it is simply that she depends entirely on different aspects of the same trick of startled incoherent innocence, and I cannot go on laughing at the same trick all evening. Not that my difficulty has ever been shared by any of her audiences. Far from it. They have invariably been packed with enthusiastic fans whose delight has shamed me into feeling a disgruntled ingrate.

The cast of this play runs to thirty-eight, and Mr. HACKETT has been lavish in his resolve to capture some of the essential atmosphere of a London evening. The first scene is a mews, where authentic Cockney characters throw off the burdens of the day and seek refreshment in gossip and pewter-pots. A revolver-shot in the flat of a young gentleman-invader brings further gossip and police to investigate his murder.

In the subsequent story a false scent has been laid which is too ingenious to be disclosed. It is enough to say that in an amusing scene in a bus Miss LORNE accidentally involves herself in the hunt for the murderer, on the wrong side of the law; that during a perilous ride in a taxi—in which she is at her funniest—she comes near to being added to the victims of the day; that her engagement as a cinema-attendant wearing the rich apparel of the Orient, with a small straw *pagoda* on her head, is full of incident; that her brushes with the constabulary are conducted on either side with the maximum of courtesy, and that the current of melodrama running parallel to all this flows in an exciting channel.

For this side of the play Miss CATHLEEN NESBITT, calm and resourceful, does much as the mother of the murdered man; she is an actress who can suggest the whole synopsis of a tragedy with one little weary gesture. As the outlaw, Mr. ROBERT ANDREWS gives a tense and satisfying performance; and his pursuers are excellently taken by Mr. EDWIN STYLES, who gives a charming, rather Hulbertian portrait of a public-school policeman, and by Mr. RICHARD GRAY as the *Superintendent* of fiction. ERIC.



ARRESTING FANCY DRESS

Ambrosia Seabrook . . . . . MISS MARION LORNE
Reginald Sinclair . . . . . MR. EDWIN STYLES



SOMEBODY'S LOST SMOKE

Mrs. Morant . . . MISS CATHLEEN NESBITT

At the Music-Hall

"SWING IS IN THE AIR"
(PALLADIUM)

AND BUD FLANAGAN is in full leaf, his hat flapping and his fat friendly grin threatening every moment a collapse into nursery giggles at his own expense. Little else matters when this gifted comedian is on the stage. He is one of the two chief pillars of this programme, which is halfway to being a revue in that the performers stray into each others' acts, and which has all the pace which one associates with Mr. GEORGE BLACK'S productions.

A ridiculous sketch, in which FLANAGAN and ALLEN, partners in a failing second-hand-clothes shop, induce customers to choose unsuitable overcoats by stuffing the pockets with wallets, is good knockabout, and FLANAGAN is at the top of his form in a long conversation at a race-meeting, where, as a jockey, he persistently misinterprets the instructions of his owner (ALLEN).

The second pillar is JACK HYLTON, who gives full measure with a band of over thirty players, besides taking part in several of the sketches. JACK HYLTON himself is refreshingly free from the shadow-boxing antics of many jazz-conductors, his team is perfectly trained, and it includes a saxophonist named FREDDY SCHWEITZER, who has one of the most laughable faces I have ever seen and knows just what to do with it.

The next best turn is that of AFRIQUE, who is a vocal impersonator with a keen sense of satire and a fine bass voice. G.B.S., TAUBER and PAUL ROBESON are among his victims. But in some ways the peak of the evening comes when FLANAGAN, ALLEN and JACK HYLTON present the first prize in a crooning competition which turns out to be an immense cart-horse, to a gentleman of uncertain musical talent who is given permission to watch the rest of the entertainment from the side of the stage, where he sits anxiously clutching a stout rope attached to his new pet. For some reason which is not easy to explain this arrangement is exceedingly funny. ERIC.

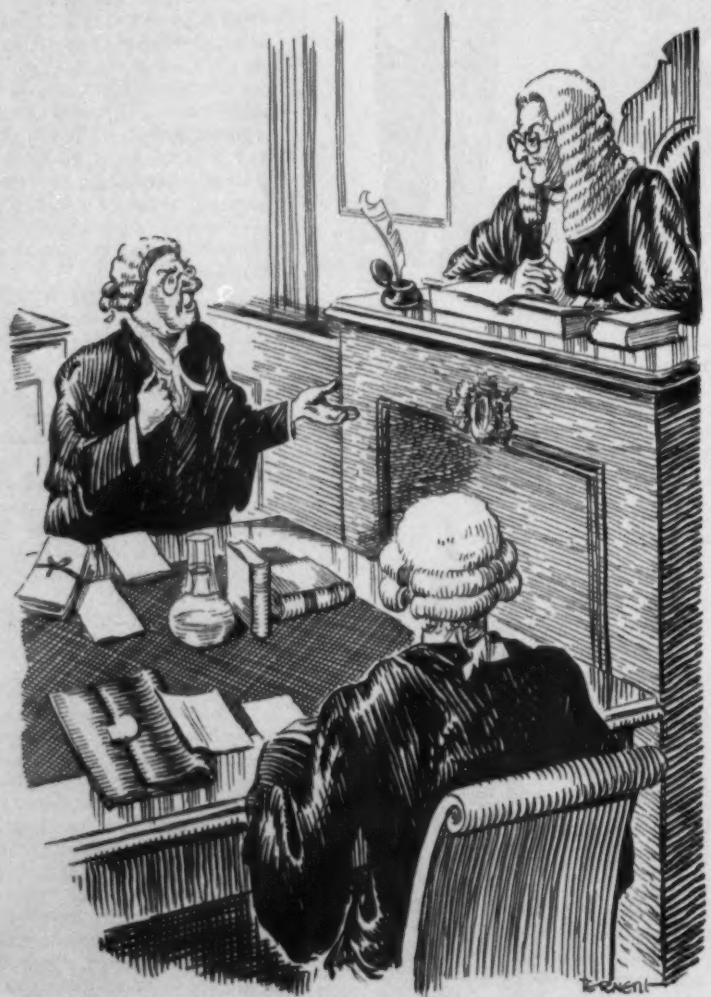
How to Play the Piano

ANYONE anxious to get down to making music for himself, although the choice is wide, can do hardly better than select a piano. So many instruments, whilst good in their way, are really only harmonious heard sounding amongst a lot of others, and frequently their design and the method of holding on to them give the performer, especially if it be a lady, an odd appearance. This is particularly the case with so-called wind instruments, which in addition require a considerable effort to operate them and properly should never be attempted by the fair sex or those enjoying ill-health. A beginner therefore may be excused for eschewing the musical catalogue and addressing himself to the piano.

The piano, or more properly the pianoforte, is a somewhat ancient instrument coming from Italy. In Italian "piano" is said to mean "soft," while "forte" means "loud." Thus our musical companion is in reality the "soft-loud." The name comes from two pedals situated at the bottom of most pianos, one of which is the soft pedal, the other the loud. As might be expected, on depressing the soft pedal soft music is heard, and on depressing the loud pedal, vice-voce.

Since borrowing a piano is unsatisfactory in the long run, the beginner must by crook or hook become the possessor of an instrument, and a few words on this subject may not come amiss. The ideal of many is the grande pianoforte—the sort of thing one sees at the Queen's Hall type of place. Here no doubt such an instrument is all very well. Its height permits all but the most diminutive performers to keep an eye on the conductor, an important point in itself for some works, and for another thing, by lifting the lid and suitably pointing the instrument, enough music to fill a good-sized hall may be directed at the audience *without* excessive depression of the loud pedal. But in the home with no conductor and possibly a mere scattering of well-tried friends for audience, these advantages go for very little. On all other points, except perhaps tone and action, the familiar upright "has it." A number of admirable models of this type exist, and of these the best is the sort with the fretted body. The generous open-work, with a backing of thin silk to filter harshness of tone, permits the full passage of the music to the executor's ear in all its original beauty, and in its passage it is given an indefinable warmth and vibrance by the craftsman's richly scrolled wood, as in old fiddles. Such an instrument, the older the better, can often be picked up, with a nose for a bargain, for little less than a song. With reasonable care it will last something short of a lifetime. Lucky the man with such a friend. But we cannot all be fortune's favourites, and those who for divers reasons find themselves compelled to submerge natural preference before other desiderata will have little left for regret if they select carefully a standard overstrung cottage. The points to look for are ease of movement of the "ivories," accurate balance of the pedals, ample knee-room both vertically and horizontally, a good quality wood with the grain running in certain directions, symmetry of the keyboard about the sitting position (*i.e.*, top and bottom notes should be within equidistant distances or the same length apart), and the sort of sound emitted, the tonal range, when several notes are simultaneously struck off the top register. If the instrument under consideration comes well out of these tests, then it's a worth-while instrument and a deposit may be placed with confidence.

Seated at the keyboard for the first time the beginner must take stock of his surroundings, get the feel of things as it were. The stool must be set for height and distance so that any part of the instrument is within easy grasp of the fingers, and once so set a few



"NOW, M'LUD, SUPPOSE I SAW YOU GOING INTO A PUBLIC-HOUSE——"
"YOU MEAN COMING IN."



"WHEN WE GET BACK, I WANT TO HAVE A REUNION OF ALL THE DELIGHTFUL FRIENDS I HAVE MADE, AND I HOPE YOU WILL BOTH . . . ."

"THAT'S—ER—VERY GOOD OF YOU—ER . . . ."

"SPLENDID! AND NOW *would* YOU MIND TELLING ME YOUR NAMES?"

chalk-marks on the floor will fix its position for all time. A roll of good-class music should be opened out and placed on the music-stand and during the early days should never be removed therefrom, so that, with this example constantly before his eyes, the novice may gradually learn to know what real music looks like. By this means a lot of time and trouble is saved later on. A reliable metronome should be wound up, placed in a central position on top of the piano and set going at average tempo. After noting the time (rigid hours of practice are essential for success) and checking it roughly with the indications on the metronome, the stage is set for the first lesson.

A glance at the keyboard will show that the piano has eighty-eight notes, fifty-two white and about thirty-six black. The black notes are a bit higher than the white notes. This ensures that they are not struck by any untoward accident. Counting from the bottom of the piano, all notes, irrespective of colour, are numbered alphabetically—A, B, C and so on, but the best view-point for the beginner is the keyhole in the centre. Immediately above this keyhole will be found a white note. Take note of this note for it is the note around which all music is built—middle C. The pupil can hardly make a better start than by striking this king-pin of harmony. Later in his career he will recall with a moist eye the occasion when first the mellow fundamental tones assaulted his hearing. To me it is, and always will be, my favourite note—the first flower in my musical garden. With proper feelings, then, gently but firmly strike middle C, and when the tones have died away strike it again. Open out the digits and repeat one by one. Bring the left into action, including the thumb. Keep it up until the note may be struck with a fair degree of certainty by any one finger. This may take some time, but proficiency here is a *status quo non*. Only when this hurdle has been laid low should the pupil embark on the next move. Adhering strictly to middle C, start at next to nothing and work up gradually to a final crescendissimo. Try it once or twice with the loud pedal down and take note of the results. The drama of music may burst on the student now or it may come later, but come it surely will if he has the right material in him. Persevere with ascending volumes with both hands and feet in varying degrees of co-operation. Continue until a feeling of utter familiarity with middle C literally permeates the atmosphere. If progress seems slow at times remember that he who is master of one note has nothing to fear from the others.

And now please turn to Page 1 of *The Neo-Quaver Music Mentor*. And *bon voyage!*

At the Revue

A gentleman home from Corfu was taken to see a revue. He said, "I can't stand this cacophonous band, and as for the tap-dancing—Ugh!"

Vocabulary

"KINAI 've that jarrer vaseline fur cross, please?"

This, you say to yourself, is the beginning of one of those tough American novels in which guys crack other guys over the head with rods, and G-men, molls and pretzels abound.

But it isn't. No, no, no.

It's just your own dear little child—who is being expensively educated at one of our big modern public schools for girls—addressing her father.

"Kin I, Daddy?"

"Kin you—I mean can you what?"

"Have some?"

The parent, full of good intentions, may at this point hand over the marmalade, should the scene be laid at the breakfast-table.

"*Here* you are."

"Daddy! Hee, hee, hee! Daddy, you *are* funny!"

Even your son and heir—who is being expensively educated at one of our big modern public schools for boys—sees the brilliant humour of the situation and says something that sounds like, "Wooda be marvla' twuse *marmalade* fur cross?"

"Gosh!"

"Hee, hee, hee!"

"Fancy ole thingamy's face!"

"Gosh!"

The dialogue, you will perceive, is now wholly between the two members of the younger generation. The word "Gosh!" is definitely recognisable. The recurrent *motif* of the Fur Cross is recognisable without being intelligible.

The gentle tact of a mother, it is well known, is often called upon to reinforce the sometimes rather frail link between father and child.

"I don't think Daddy really heard what you said, darling. In fact I don't see how anybody could have heard it; you gabbled so."

"Mummy! I was *abs*'lutely distink. I heard myself perfeccly."

"Mummy! Honestly she was speaking as slowly as anything. Unless a person was rather deaf or anything, I mean. Not that I mean you and Daddy are really abs'lutely *deaf* or anything, but you honestly never hear anything. What she said was abs'lutely oke by me."

"You mean you heard what she said?"

"Oh, sorry. I forgot you don't like oke. Well, it was okey-doke."

Rather unfortunately the head of the family has caught this last singular word and elected to comment upon it.

"What in Heaven's name will you bring home next? Where do you *get* these horrible expressions? What do they *mean*? Okey-doke!!!"

"Hee, hee, hee! Daddy, you *are* funny!"

"Daddy, d' you honestly mean it's the first time you've heard okey-doke? Why's *fri'fly* old."

"'Tso ole *we* 've given up saying it at school."

"Please give up saying it at home as well. And I still don't know what it was you asked me for."

"Daddy! Don't you? I only asked for that jar that you got on the tool-house's top-shelf of vaseline."

"What do you want it for?"

"Daddy, I *tole* you. Didn't you hear what I said?"

"I couldn't make out a word."

"Gosh!"

"Hee, hee, hee! Daddy, you are funny!"

Again one of the functions of a mother is to divert the often misplaced mirth of her children.

"Never mind, darling; just tell us quietly and plainly, if you can, what you want the vaseline for."

"Fur crostic, like I said."

"Do you mean 'for an acrostic'? Because, if so, I don't see——"

"Mummy! For a 'CROSSE STICK—to clean it."

"A *lacrosse* stick?"

"Mummy! *Nobody* ever says 'lacrosse' now. You always talk about 'crosse. Everybody in the world does."

But for once contemporary support is lacking.

"As a matterafac'," judicially observes the product of the other public school, "there are a few people who jus' call it *lax*. L a X, you see."

"Gosh! I think that's foul. And I'm sure it's *frightfully* bad English."

Quite.

E. M. D.



Club Bore. "SO I'VE DEFINITELY MADE UP MY MIND TO BE CREMATED."

The Other. "RIGHT. I'LL CALL YOU A TAXI."

We Have the Best Faces—You Want Them!

I HAVE often thought that many women, at present included in what might be described as the non-fashionable majority, have a lurking desire to reconstruct their faces in such a way as to enable them to join the ranks of their fashionable sisters.

They are, however, discouraged from doing so by the ingenuous and frequently fatuous nature of modern advertisements dealing with such matters. What they require is a clear statement of the general effect to be aimed at, together with a description of the simplest method to employ.

It is to such ladies that the following lines are addressed in the hope that they may prove of real help.

First of all, ladies, let me clarify your minds on the fundamentals. We see around us numerous advertisements purporting to deal with face adjustment by means of face massage, face lifting, face lowering, etc. Such advertisements are misleading and have been largely responsible for the prevalent idea that it is the face itself which must be reconstructed. Nothing could be further from the truth. In point of fact very little need be done to the *actual* face, which should be regarded merely as a foundation for the new face. Consequently—and this is of fundamental importance—it matters not two pins what the actual face is like.

Assuming, then, that the eyes, nose and mouth are in their correct positions relatively to each other, there is only one definite adjustment necessary to the actual face. This consists in the removal of wrinkles by tightening the skin with the help of an astringent such as vinegar. It is important that

wrinkles should be removed, as, should the wrinkles show through the new applied face, they might give a slightly natural look to the face, and this is to be avoided at all costs. A perfectly blank expressionless expanse of face is required and can be obtained partly by the skin-tightening process already referred to and partly by training the muscles of the face into a state of complete immobility. Smiling is very unwise for the wearer of the modern face, while grinning is disastrous.

Let us suppose, therefore, that a course of muscle-control has been undergone and that the actual face has been thoroughly soaked in vinegar. We are now ready for the second stage in the treatment.

Our general aim is to construct a new face—let us therefore have as *much* face as possible. This can be secured by the removal of unwanted hair.

To begin with, if you have not already done so, cut off most of your hair so as to prevent its natural beauty spoiling the effect of the final face. Leave a few rough ends round the face and brush these tightly back, screwing them into little circular twists. This will give an abnormally large appearance to the face.

The general look of blankness is to be increased by the removal of most of your eyebrows, which should be torn out one by one with a pair of pliers.

The actual face is now ready for the application of the new face.

Take a good double handful of any thick greasy paste and spread it evenly over the face to a depth of about an eighth of an inch. Cover this with a copious application of powder and the result will be the true putty-coloured effect which is prized so highly. This colour will probably satisfy most women, but the addition of yellow ochre to the paste and/or powder will produce the completely corpse-like appearance which is now attained by many of the smartest women.

The final touch is the treatment of the lips. At the time of writing a vivid scarlet is regarded as a *sine qua non*, but in view of the faint hint of nature in this colour I throw out the suggestion for what it is worth that one of you ladies should appear in Bond Street with, say, black, green or blue lips.

The new face is now complete, but the whole effect can easily be spoiled by the choice of the wrong kind of hat. A few hints therefore about hats may not be out of place.

Suitable hats are of two kinds, the almost non-existent and the funny. The first in its best form consists of the smallest possible skull-cap which, by reducing the apparent size of the cranium still further and to an almost unbelievable extent increases the apparent size of the face. The second or funny type needs special consideration.

Milliners often describe their wares as "amusing," but this is not enough for the wearer of the modern face, whose hat must be *really* funny. The best results are obtained by using a skull-cap as a base and creating upon this a superstructure of some unusual shape. There is room here for considerable ingenuity, but excrutiatingly funny effects may be obtained by shaping the super-structure in the form of a plate, cup and saucer, soap-dish, oast-house or eel-trap.

Now, ladies, your new face is in position; it has been fitted with a suitable hat and you are ready to meet the public eye. *Have no fear that the public will laugh.*

It is well known to people who have travelled in the East that a native can take off or put on anything; he can appear in the most ludicrously incongruous assortment of garments: in short he can make himself look a perfect guy, but his compatriots never laugh. The reason is that they have become so accustomed to the screamingly funny that it no longer amuses. The same sort of thing has happened in England.

However, if at the last minute your heart fails you, wear one of the fashionable little veils which stick out over the face. They have been specially designed to cover up some of the mess.



"I BLOWS BEST ON TAPIOCA."



"Is this the Slocum Magna Road?"
"I couldn't tell you, Miss. I'm a stranger 'ere meself."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Mediterranean Politics

It would not be surprising to learn that Sir Charles Petrie enjoys a daily bout with a punch-ball. His lively and pugnacious style causes his provocative statements to ring in the ear like the thudding impact of fist and ball. The *Lords of the Inland Sea* (Lovat Dickson, 10/6), of whose rivalling policies Sir Charles writes so trenchantly, are indeed far removed alike in power and ability from the old-time Barbary corsairs whose very name struck terror into the hearts of Mediterranean seafarers. Nevertheless there are among them men who at times seem to copy piratical methods. The Mediterranean problem is something more than a clean-cut issue between Fascism and Communism. There are other factors (and colours) mixed up in it. What of the forces that are already stirring upon its long African coast-line to what may eventually prove to be a dangerous activity? After all, there are two sides to the Mediterranean as there are two—and more than two—aspects of the problem. Sir Charles's gaze has been too exclusively directed upon its European shore and aspect. Men like Mussolini and Kemal Ataturk do indeed temporarily influence Mediterranean destiny. It would be unwise to assume that if they have successors these will wield the same arbitrary power. Africa may then find its opportunity in the redressal of the Mediterranean balance of power. A stimulatingly controversial book.

The Last of Birrell

If the late Augustine Birrell had not waited until he was eighty to write his autobiography his memoirs might have exhibited more animus but would assuredly have been more animated. Any rancour a political life might have left has been benignly eschewed in *Things Past Redress* (Faber and Faber, 15/-); but so unfortunately has the skirmishing wit that enriched the English language with the obsolescent verb "to birrell." Almost a great man of letters, Birrell could claim a promising heredity. His maternal grandmother dressed up as a boy in order to hear a Parliamentary debate; while the social isolation he notes in his father's Baptist circle made for a vigorous individualism like that of the Martineaus and Gaskells. Yet somehow the vein peters out; and this book, with its rather lack-lustre comment on men and affairs, reflects the wane of a great Nonconformist tradition. There are memorable pictures, of course: a middle-aged Gladstone, a very old Brougham, C.-B., Asquith and a curmudgeonly Tennyson accusing Birrell —who married his son's widow—of "forcing an entrance" into his (the poet's) family. But the literary criticism—

genuine, graceful, ardent and discerning—shows the author of *Obiter Dicta* at his best.

A Walk out of London

When J. C. SQUIRE (Sir JOHN) went
  out
Afoot from London Town
To Blundell's School and set about
  The task of jotting down
Notes on the people whom he met
  And where he hung his hat,
It was a fairly certain bet
  He wouldn't stop at that.

Nor does he. Though with eye and
  ear
Alert he wanders on
Through Putney, Stockbridge,
  Salisbury, Mere,
Bath, Wells and Beckington,
Seeking whatever he may find
  At hand, his roving view
Enfolds the world and all mankind
  From China to Peru.

Remembered charm of friend or
  place
Suggested unawares
Adorns his pages with a grace
  That's his no less than theirs.
The Honeysuckle and the Bee—
  Thus carefree is his plan—
He labels his miscellany
  (From Mr. HEINEMANN).

Burmese Legend

There are several ways of telling a tale and Mr. MAURICE COLLIS has chosen one of the best in *She Was a Queen* (FABER, 15/-). The author's narrative is blunt and explicit, his point of view remote, his manner sophisticated in the extreme. He is not afraid of artificiality; signs of hard and successful building are visible on every page. Perhaps the reader may stick a little at the very beginning but he will soon become familiar with this fantastic creation and its attitude, Chinese rather than Burmese, towards human life and effort. Thenceforth one's appreciation increases with every chapter. The period is that of KUBLAI KHAN'S invasion of Burma, when anything might and did happen. The numerous characters, richly comic or splendidly insane, all possess a certain grandeur. The story itself, derived from the Glass Palace Chronicle of 1827, is rather more than marvellous. MARCO POLO, who himself faintly appears, could not have equalled it. The publishers have supported the author with commendable gusto, matching his mannered style with all their resources of type and picture.

A Chesterton Legacy

It would be a mistaken kindness to the memory of Mr. G. K. CHESTERTON to pretend that his last book, *The Paradoxes of Mr. Pond* (CASSELL, 7/6), is among his best. These stories of a Government official who produces glaring paradoxes out of his hat and proceeds to demonstrate their truth by reminiscence have neither the fine frenzy of *The Poet and the Lunatics* nor the subtlety and romantic symbolism of the *Father Brown* tales. That is not to condemn them—far from it, for they cannot help but show, even the least impressive of them, more imaginative force than is to be met with in a dozen stories by a less masterful hand. It is only to say that here we have CHESTERTON at his most careless, CHESTERTON almost unashamedly pot-boiling. Even so there are at least two stories the reader will not easily forget—"The Unmentionable Man" and, first and best of the collection, "The Three Horsemen of Apocalypse."



"WHAT TIME DOES BAR OPEN?"

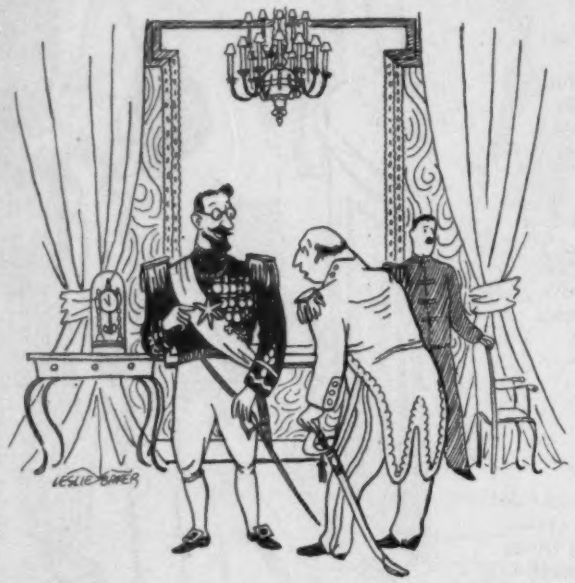
"IT DON'T SIGNIFY, SIR. RESIDENTS IN THE HOTEL IS LIABLE TO HAVE A DRINK AT ANY TIME."

Celia to Rosalind

"What a year of fiction-writers we were!" ejaculates Miss WINIFRED HOLTBY, looking back on her first year at Somerville. "Well, well; Oxford doesn't like us. We aren't scholarly." And she puzzles her generous head over the problem, for, though very modest about her own capacity, she exhibits a touching reverence for the feminine intelligentsia of her day. The measure of your participation in this enthusiasm is likely to be the measure of your interest in *Letters to a Friend* (COLLINS, 10/6). Their recipient, the *Rosalind* to Miss HOLTBY'S *Celia*, was a fellow-Somervillian, a fellow-Waac and a fellow-educationalist; but "*Rosalind*" was established in a South African school while "*Celia*" was still seeking English teaching posts and receiving back unwanted manuscripts. The letters begin on their writer's return to post-War Oxford and cease not long before her untimely death. Compassion is the most eloquent of her qualities: witness her Bethnal Green, "where a few faded daffodils languish on a street booth and one narrow window is cold with white funeral flowers." But she was squandered by a wasteful age and had little inclination and less leisure for the quintessence of art or life.

Steam Tramp

Mr. H. M. TOMLINSON makes a welcome return in *All Hands* (HEINEMANN, 7/6) to the manner of *Gallions Reach*. The tramp-steamer *Hestia*, with which the story is concerned, is one of those "unlucky"—or, as traffic experts would no doubt express it, "accident-prone"—ships to which a "hoodoo," a "jinx," or whatever else it may be termed, has attached itself during her building or at her launch. Accidents and delays, deaths, breakdowns and missed charters pursue her from Celebes to Sourabaya, from Java to the West India Docks, and then to the Western Ocean, where, in conflict with the full force of a hurricane, she reaches the climax of her career. Only "the human will holding off doom," in Mr. TOMLINSON'S admirable phrase, stands between her and what seems her appointed end. The comparison with CONRAD—and more especially with *Typhoon*—is here for once inevitable. Mr. TOMLINSON'S book stands the ordeal well. The narrative touches great heights not once but many times, and his seamen are neither puppets nor abstractions. So far as the deck department is concerned, he has perhaps no creation quite so unforgettable as *Captain McWhirr*; but his engineers are as good as, possibly better than, CONRAD'S, who, after all, could never quite rid himself of the professional attitude of the navigating officer towards the engine-room.



"THIS ONE CAUSES A GOOD DEAL OF COMMENT—IT'S JUST AN ORDINARY STARFISH."

A Medical Examination

If *Medical Modes and Morals* (MICHAEL JOSEPH, 7/6) is is rather a pedestrian title, the essays which it covers display not only sound sense but a lively humour. Dr. HARRY ROBERTS, who has written on things other than medicine, has been in practice for over forty years and in the East End of London for over thirty, but the harassing life of a G.P. has prevented him neither from keeping himself informed of the multitudinous developments of research nor from regarding his profession with the eye of a philosopher; while concrete instances from a diversified experience serve both to illustrate and to give relief to his generalisations. Most of what he says must strike a layman as sound, if some of it a little depressing. Dr. ROBERTS admits the present limitations of medical knowledge, that most diagnosis is still largely empirical and that mumbo-jumbo still plays its part. But his very frankness is reassuring, and it is at any rate a comfort to learn that if not "more than one bottle of medicine out of a dozen makes an iota of difference to the course of the illness for which it has been prescribed . . . not one bottle of medicine in a hundred does the slightest harm." Into the last fifty pages of the book Dr. MARGARET JACKSON has packed an interesting and comprehensive survey of "Doctors and Patients in the Past," beginning with the neolithic surgeon who bored holes in babies' heads "to let out the demon." A little progress, it may be conceded, has been made since then.

The Past and the Present

Mr. JOHN DICKSON CARR is an accomplished writer whose worst fault is that sometimes he over-elaborates his stories. *The Burning Court* (HAMISH HAMILTON, 7/6), for instance, would have been more enjoyable if what may be called magic had not been intermingled with the mystery that surrounded *Miles Despard's* death. The *Despards* lived in the country near Philadelphia, and *Miles* was murdered and then not permitted to rest peacefully in his coffin. Very dirty work, in fact, was toward, and it would be difficult to find a sensational tale that is more lavish in incident or in a sense more clever. Nevertheless a grievance remains, for Mr. CARR has not been content with his perfectly good mystery, but has decked it with frills which are not in the least required.

"Although, according to my correspondent, Gen. Royston did not actually lead the dismounted attack in that battle, he rode a fine grey whaler right up to the front wave of the advance."—*Daily Paper.*

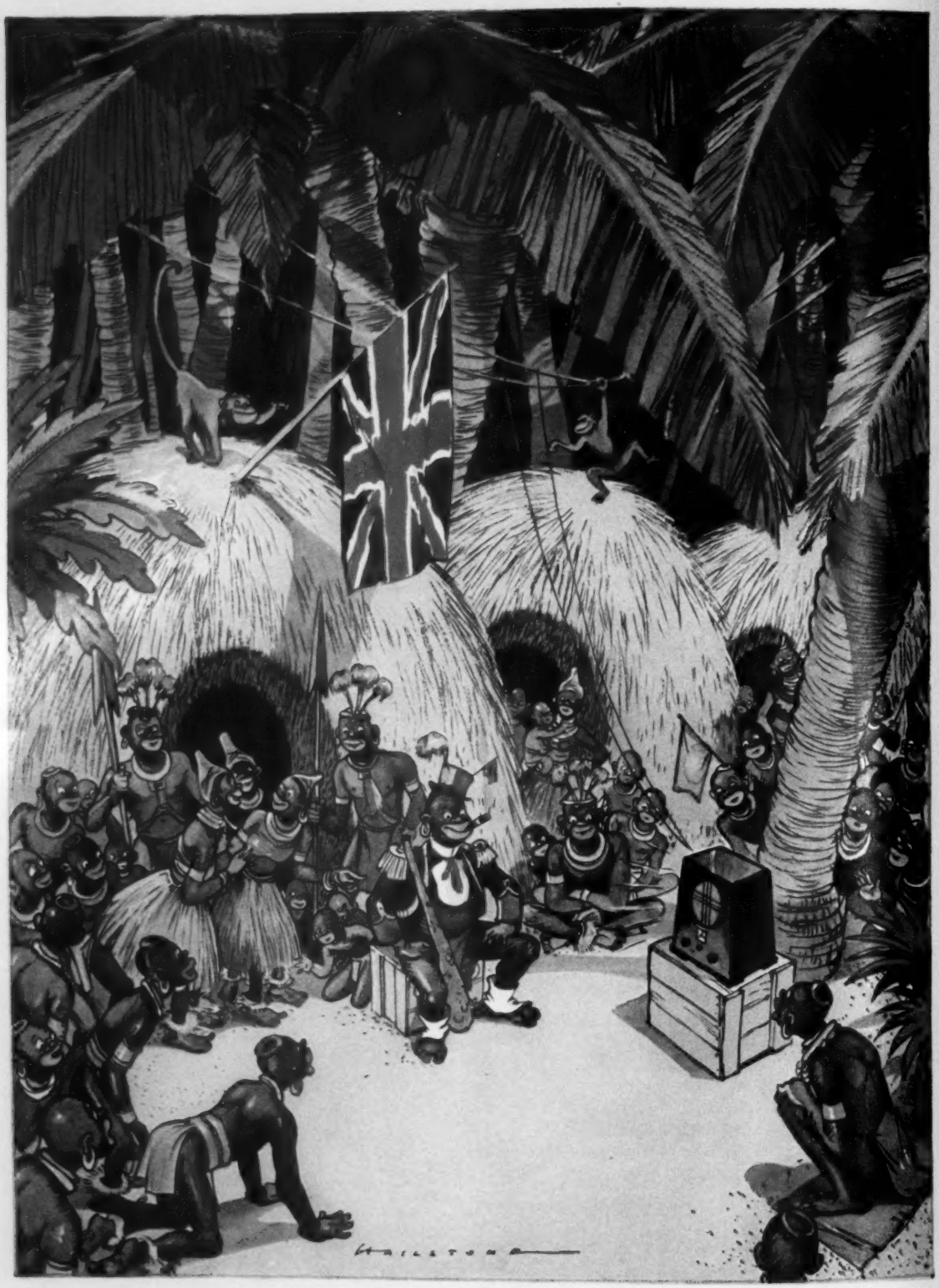
Brandishing his bright harpoon?

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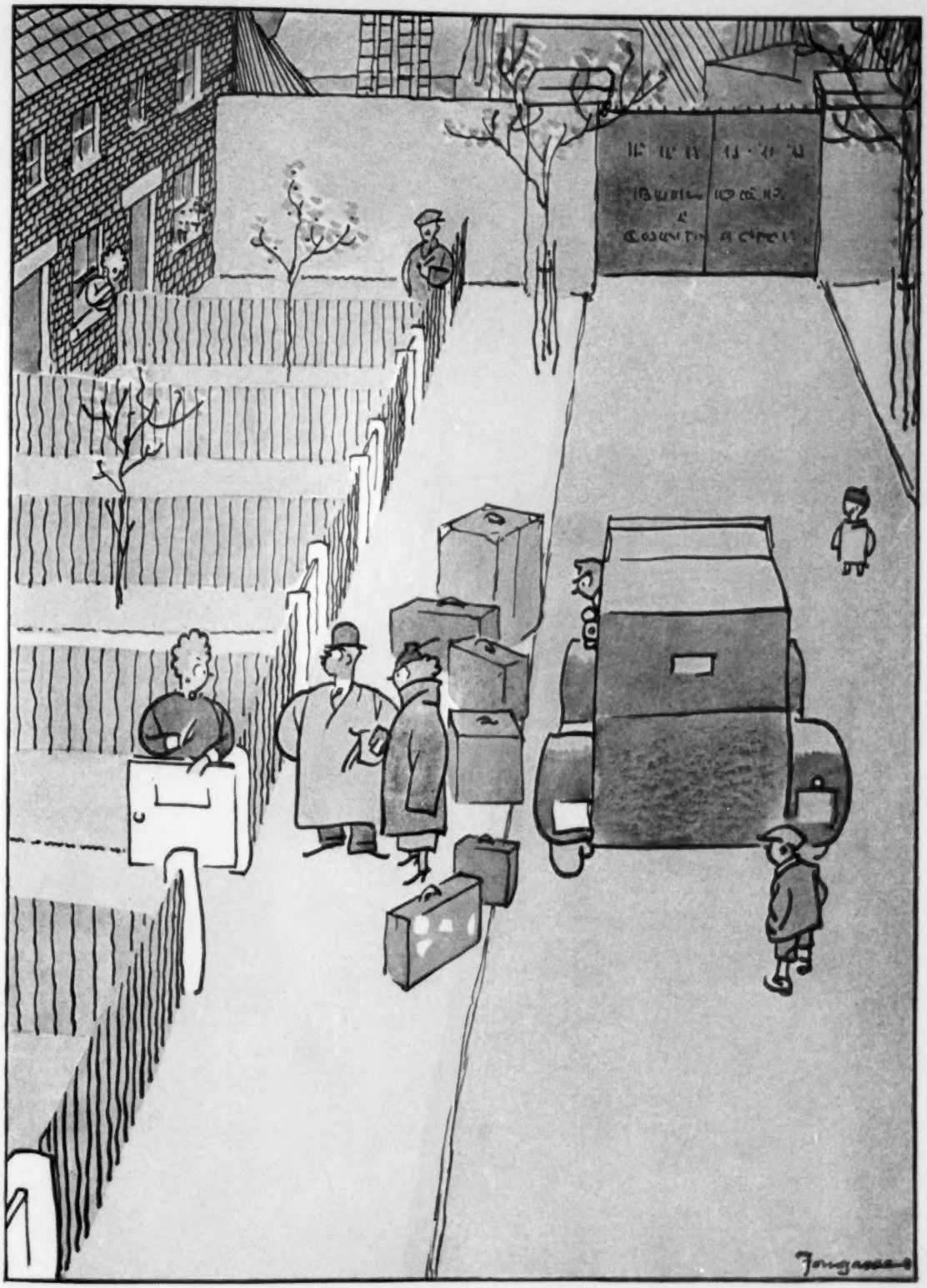
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Bouverie King of Arms makes Proclamation.



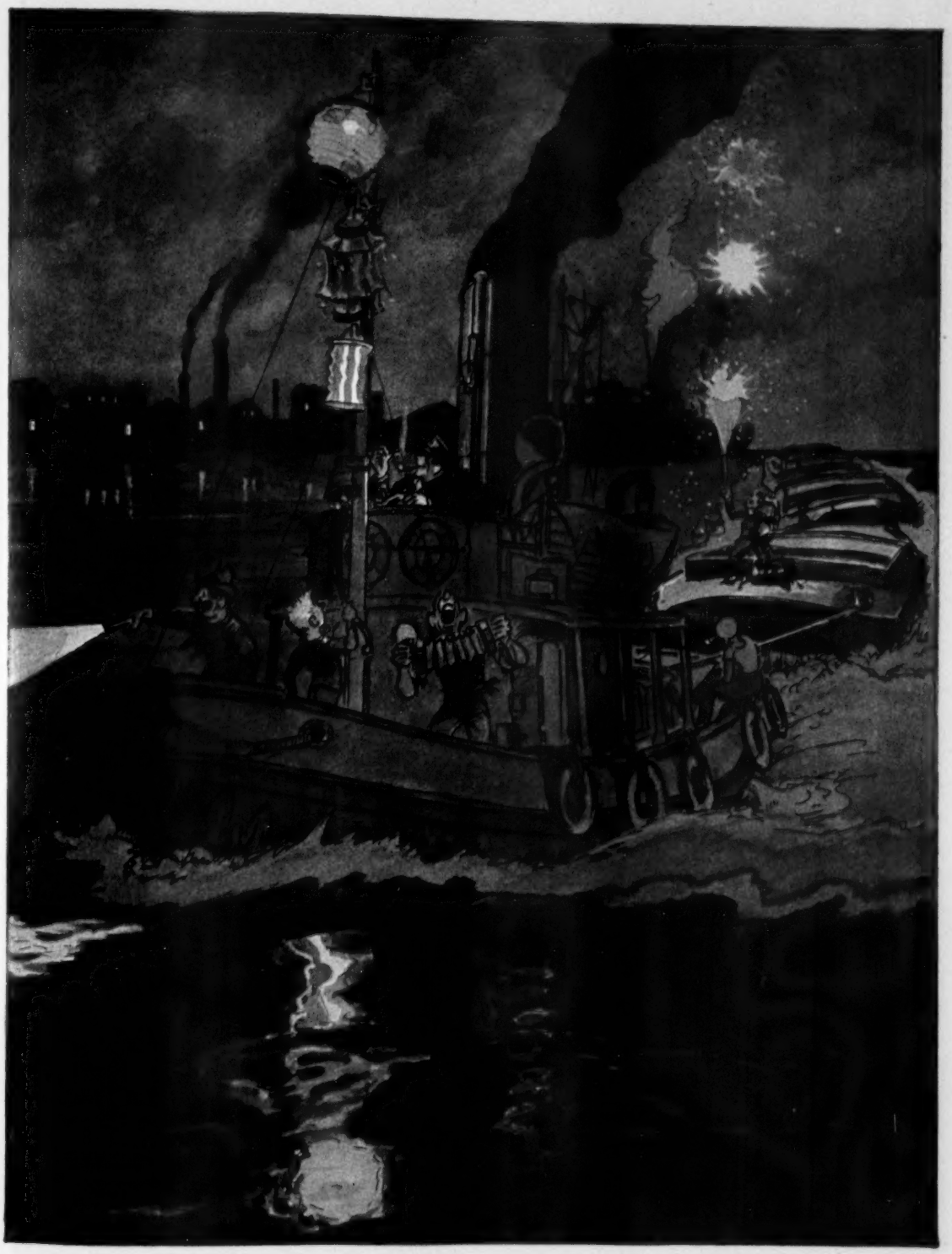
Voice of Announcer. "THE PROCESSION IS NOW LEAVING THE PALACE."



"WELL, I'M SORRY IF YOU GOT THE IMPRESSION THAT THESE ROOMS ACTUALLY OVERLOOKED THE CORONATION ROUTE ITSELF, BUT I THINK YOU REALLY MUST HAVE SLIGHTLY MISUNDERSTOOD MY LETTER."



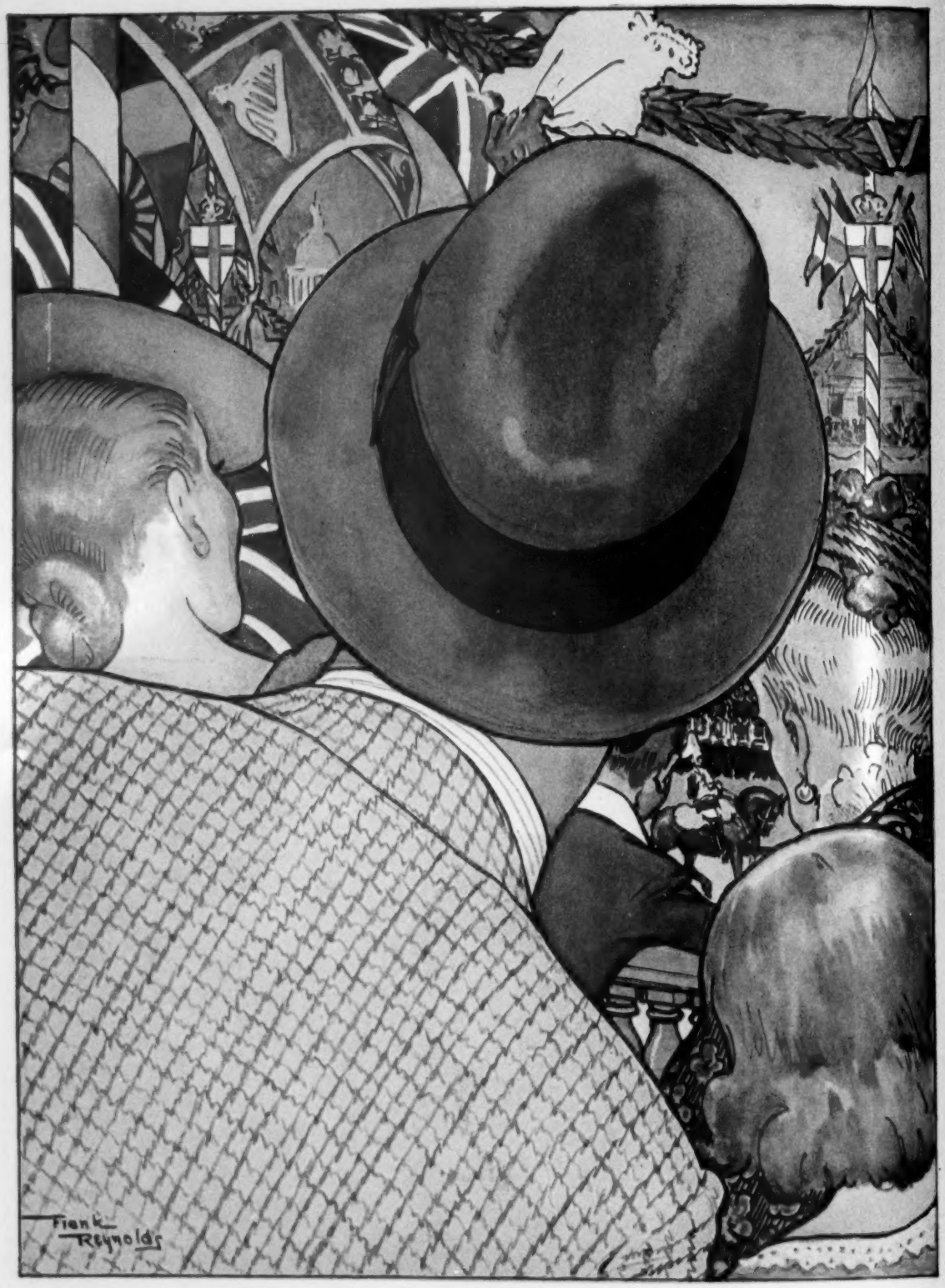
"BUT, OFFICER, I'M DOING IT ENTIRELY AT MY OWN EXPENSE!"



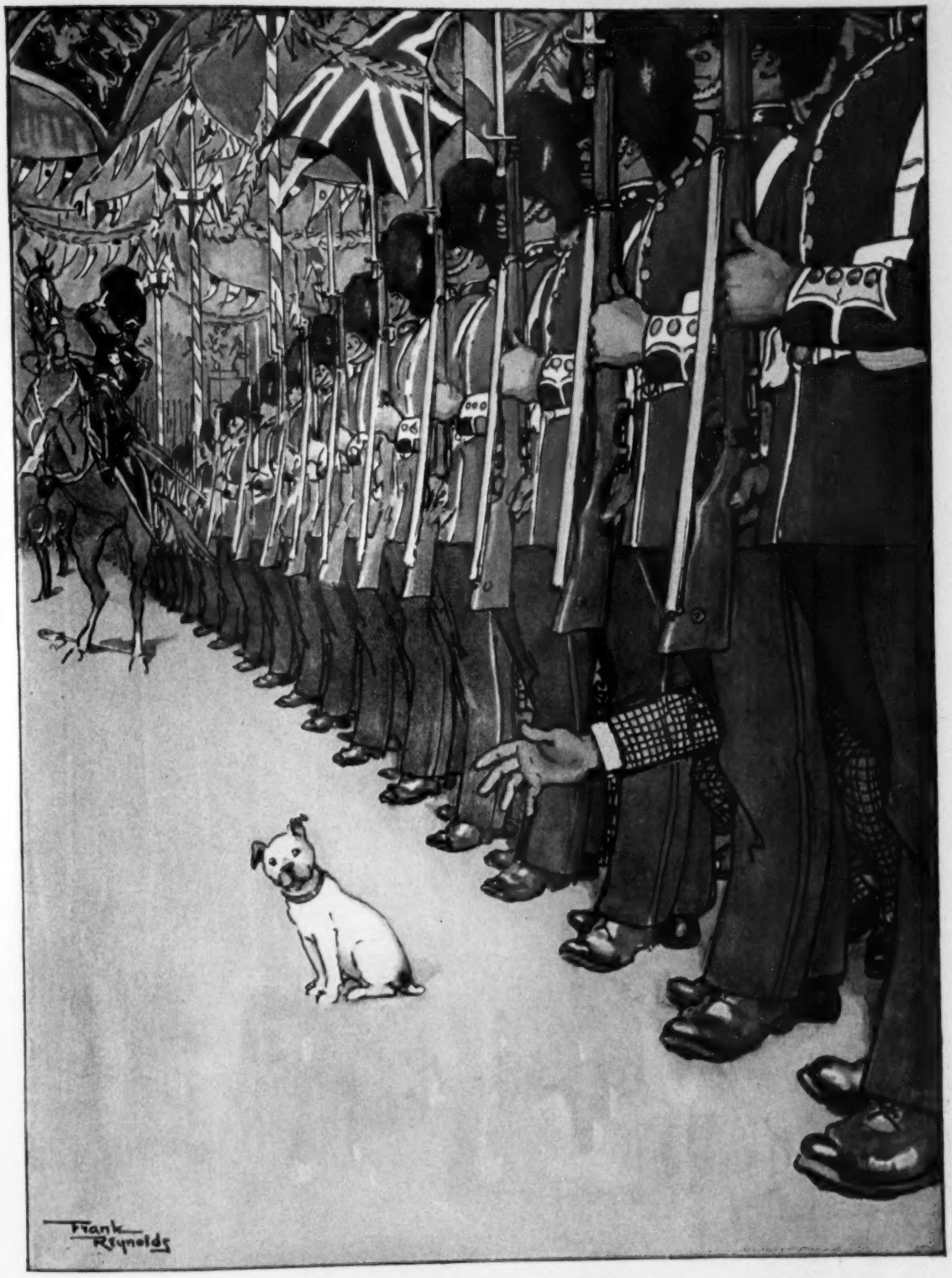
A SPECIAL EFFORT ON THE RIVER

A TUG AND HER TOW BRIGHTEN THINGS UP

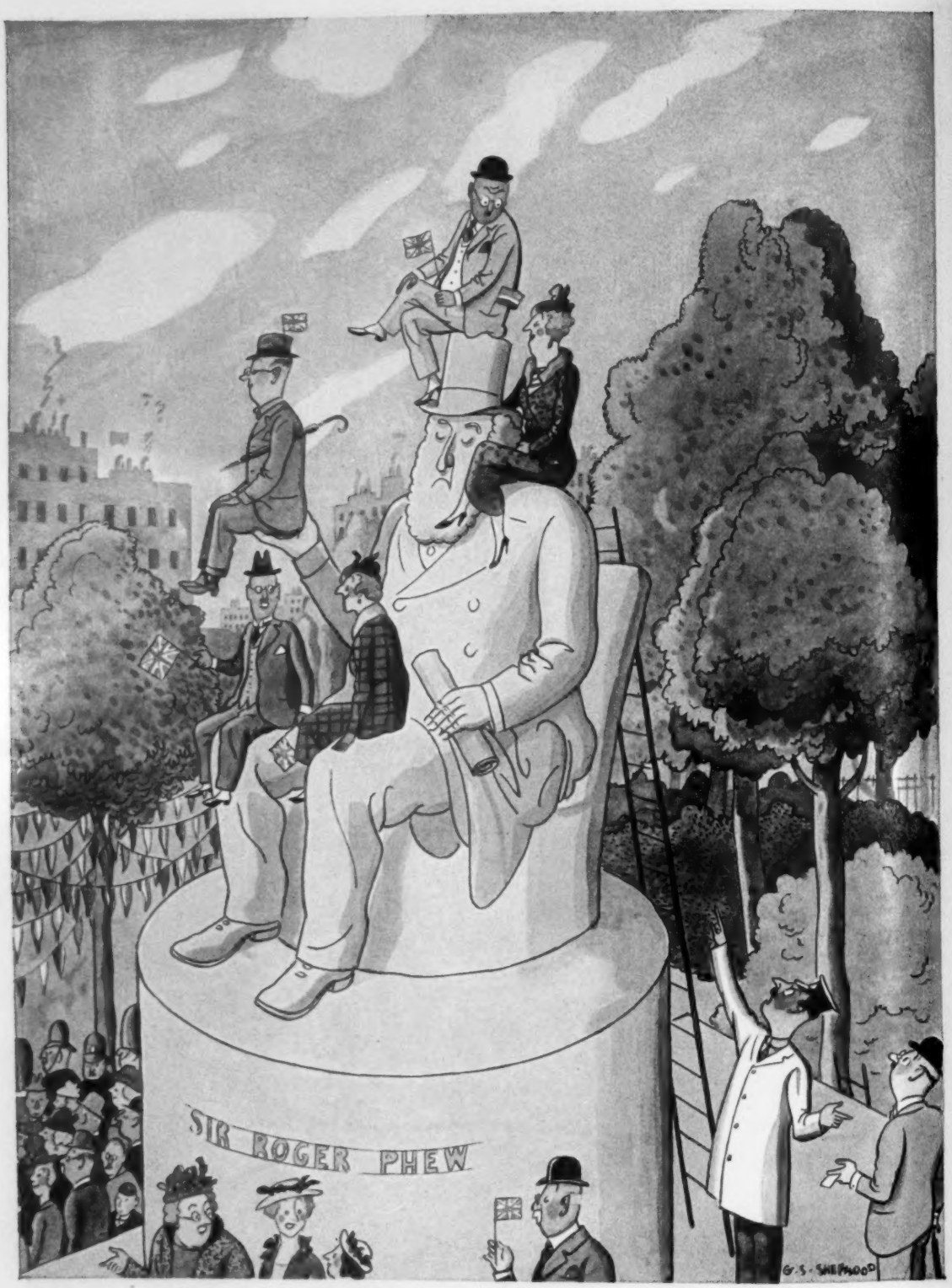
(Remarks by pilots and captains of other craft not printed)



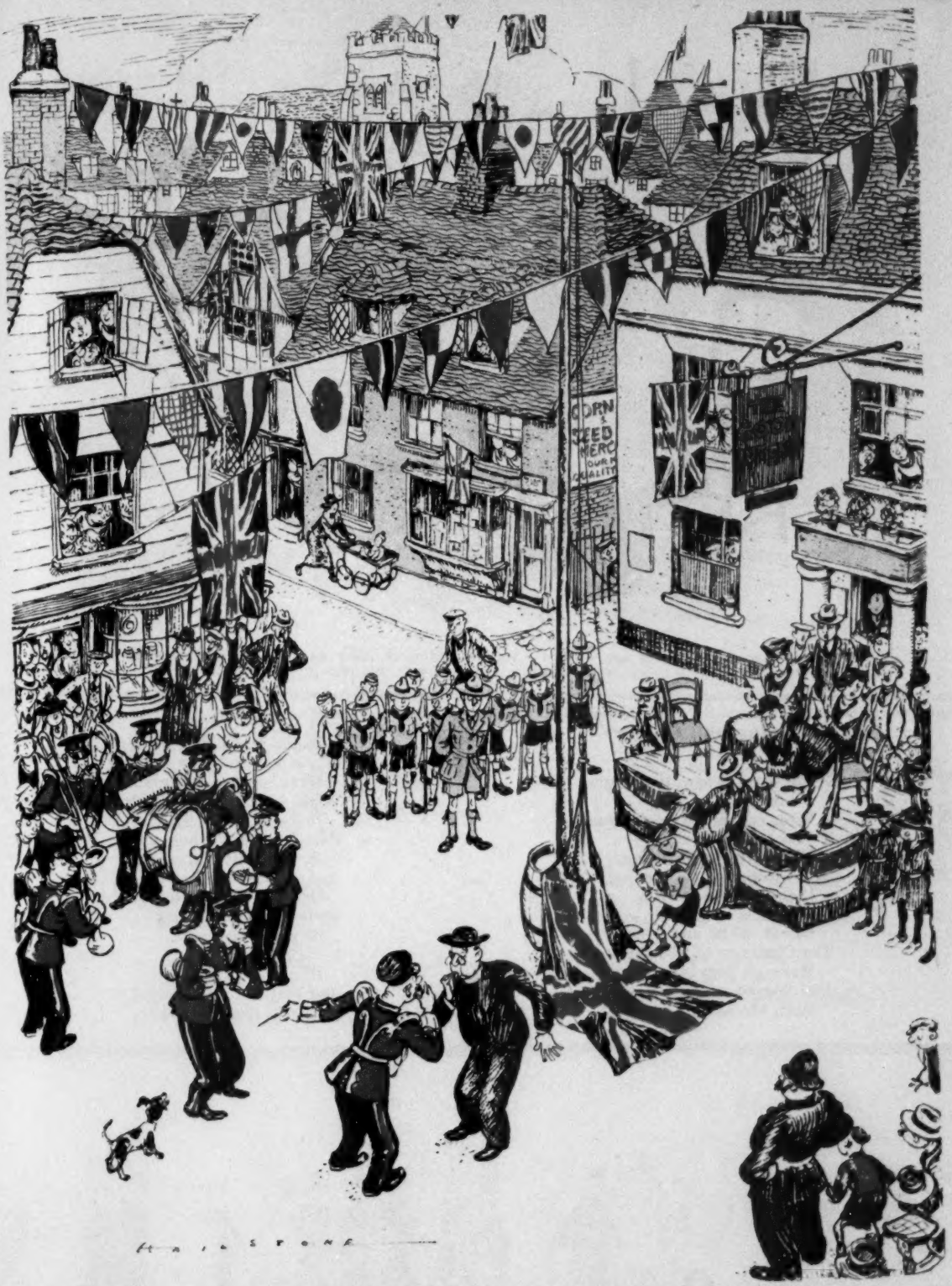
SEEING THE SHOW FOR £15.15.0



SEEING THE SHOW FOR NOTHING



"I'M AFRAID, SIR, YOU MUST BE IN YOUR WRONG SEAT; *THIS* GENTLEMAN HOLDS THE TICKET FOR SIR ROGER'S TOP-HAT."



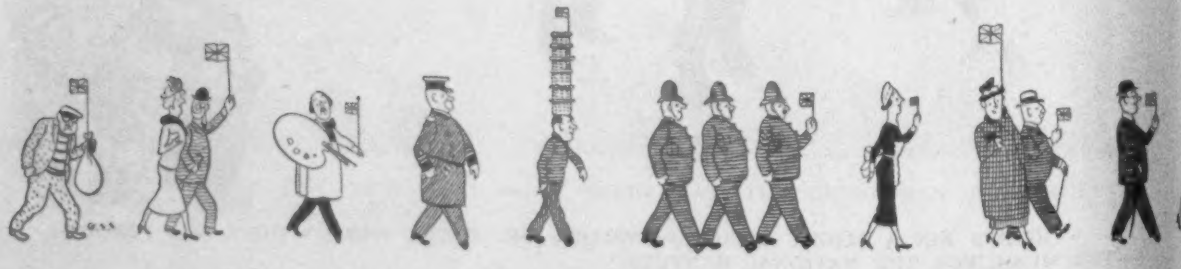
"THERE'S BIN A SLIGHT 'ITCH SOMEWHERE, SIR. YOUNG ERNIE'S GONE AND FORGOT THE MUSIC FOR THE NATIONAL HANTHEM."



"No, Mr. Nation, I cannot say whether you're the very first bearer of that name to call his daughter 'Cora.'"

Grouping the Colours

FROM Lairg, where the mountains
Wear clouds for their gowns,
To Cocking that clutches
The skirts of the downs,
From Rothesay to Reading,
From Lincoln to Looe
The land is bedizened
In red, white and blue.
The Chairmen of Councils
Have all gone ahead
And flagged every village
With blue, white and red;
And Mayors of towns
In the Midlands (the cards!)
White, red and blue bunting
Have run up in yards;
While Lord Mayors, portly
But still full of fight,
Have bannered whole cities
In blue, red and white
And studded the façades
Of town halls with scrolled
Elaborate wall-plaques
Of silver and gold.
It's all very proper,
It's all very right—
And here's to the dresses
Of red, blue and white.





"NOW, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN WE *MUST* MAKE THIS CORONATION A SUCCESS."

And three rousing cheers
For white, blue and red hats;
But why not the gesture
Blue, red and white spats?
And why not that loyal
Symbolical sight—
Blue coat and red trousers
And waistcoat of white?
And what touch of pageant
Could go to the head
Like seventeen aldermen
Dressed up in red,
With the Councillors in blue
And the Town Clerk in white

And—trumpets to left of him,
Heralds to right—
The Mace-Bearer clad in
A glittering dress
All glorious (sound, fanfares!)
In E.P.N.S.,
Preceding his Worship
The Lord Mayor, weighted
By the robes of his office,
Hall-marked and gold-plated?

I make the suggestion
Too late, as I fear:
May it serve for Their Majesties'
Jubilee Year!





THE WITCH-DOCTOR TAKES THE OPPORTUNITY OF CHARGING HIS PATIENTS A BIT MORE TO PAY FOR THE EXTRA PAINT AND WHITEWASH.

Three Good Seats

MR. Kibitzer often said that his fame as what he called "a general entrepreneur" had spread to the farthest corners of the earth, but he never really began to believe it until he received, only two or three weeks before the Coronation, a letter from some people in Portugal who wished to come and see the ceremony, requesting his help.

It was, he said, such a letter as should have been written and answered six months before, and a lesser man might have replied saying it was now far too late to do anything about getting seats. But Mr. Kibitzer could not bear the idea of doing this. In his mind's ear he heard the terms in which he had been recommended to these people: "Old man Kibitzer," he was sure someone had said, "will do it if anyone can;" and he was not going to fall short of his reputation. These people had put their trust in him and they should not be disappointed. He would perform wonders for them and they should bless him.

"Boy!" he ejaculated dreamily, imagining their gratitude, "I can hardly wait."

"It's going to be a job," commented the languid young





THE PRIZE CORONATION MUG

man he had got to translate the letter. The brisk young lady who did most of his secretarial work also said, "I don't see how you'll do it, Mr. Kibitzer."

"I got schemes," Mr. Kibitzer said, waving his cigar in a grandiose manner. He brooded a moment and then said at large: "Tell 'em O.K." Then he went away to ponder.

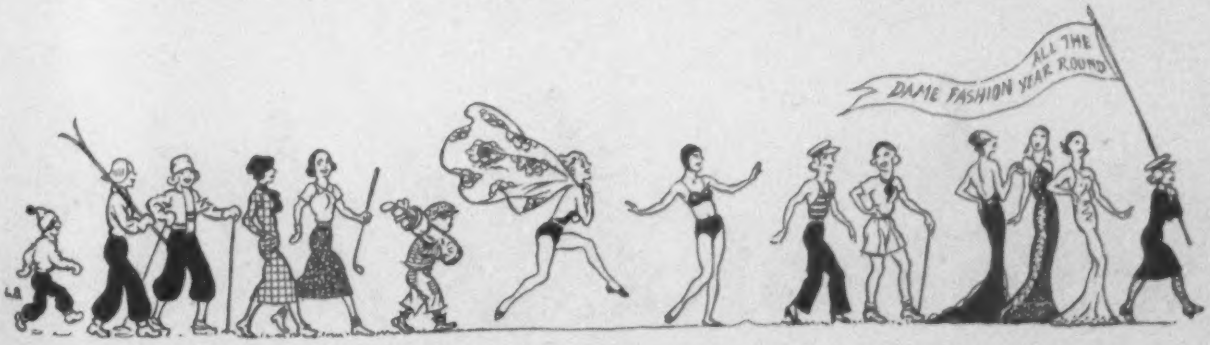
Presently the telephone rang in his room. It was a theatrical manager of his acquaintance who offered to sell him a hundredweight of cigars which had been slightly affected—very slightly—at one end by sea-water. Mr. Kibitzer asked how long they were and when he was told five-and-a-half inches, closed the deal instantly. He proposed to cut half-an-inch off and sell them at a profit, and compress the salt half-inches into cut plug. Then he said offhandedly: "Have you got seats for the Coronation?"

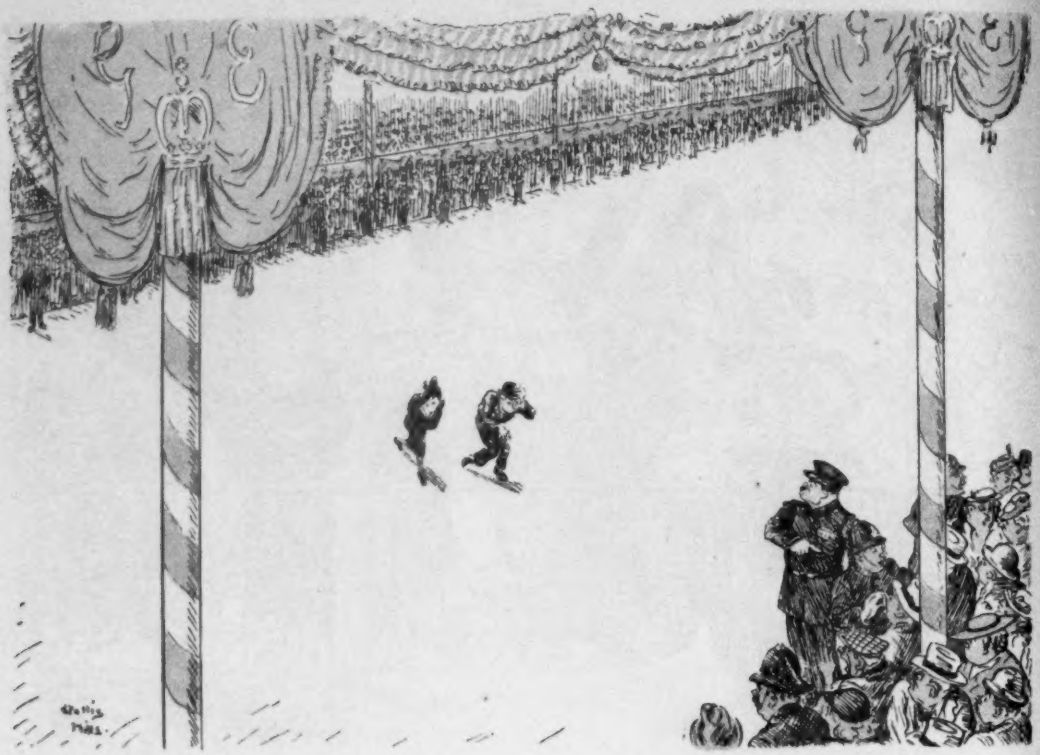
The theatrical manager said he was crawling with seats for the Coronation. This proved, when Mr. Kibitzer went into the matter, to mean that the theatrical manager had three seats: one for himself, one for his wife, and one for his poor old Aunt Gertrude who never had any fun.

Three seats was the number Mr. Kibitzer needed for the Portuguese family. He said in a pompous tone: "Old fellow, I am in a position to buy those seats, every one of them."

"No," said the theatrical manager. "My life wouldn't be worth a moment's purchase. I bought 'em last November and I paid six guineas each for 'em and my wife asks me every day how they are."

However, he went on, if Mr. Kibitzer was really set on getting some seats he knew where there were some. And he told a long involved story to the effect that a man





THE COUPLE WHO WERE ALLOWED TO CROSS THE ROUTE.

named Scudderson, who wore yellow boots, had bought sixteen or seventeen for a cricket club and now didn't want them because the club had taken to lacrosse.

Mr. Kibitzer rang off, but continued to sit at his telephone for three-quarters of an hour trying to locate the Scudderson in question, while his assistants took turns with the same end in view at the telephone in the other room. Eventually he rang up the theatrical manager again; he thought perhaps his friend might have been a bit shaky in the details, such as the boots or the cricket club; but he could not get hold of him for half-an-hour. At the end of that time he told Mr. Kibitzer that he might have been wrong, certainly; it might have been Scutterson, or possibly Chesney.

About seventy-five minutes later Mr. Kibitzer got on to a man named Scunderson who said, Yes, he had had five seats but had sold them in January. "They were for some dart-playing chums of mine," he explained.

"Do you wear yellow boots?" asked Mr. Kibitzer. Scunderson replied that he did so very seldom, because they showed up the mud so on wet days, but he admitted they gave a natty effect. Mr. Kibitzer hung up and rested his head in his hands.

Presently a gladdening thought stole into his head: he had undoubtedly earned a drink. He went out and had one. While he was staring sadly at the bar-counter, revolving in his mind possibilities that grew steadily crazier, a stout man smoking a carved pipe got into conversation with him. This man had been talking for some time before Mr. Kibitzer realised that Coronation seats were under discussion. He became a little more attentive and was thunder-





"Is this the first Coronation you've seen too, Daddy?"

struck to hear the man say: "And now I've got to get rid of 'em again."

"Get rid of 'em?" said Mr. Kibitzer, with a look of terrible uncertainty.

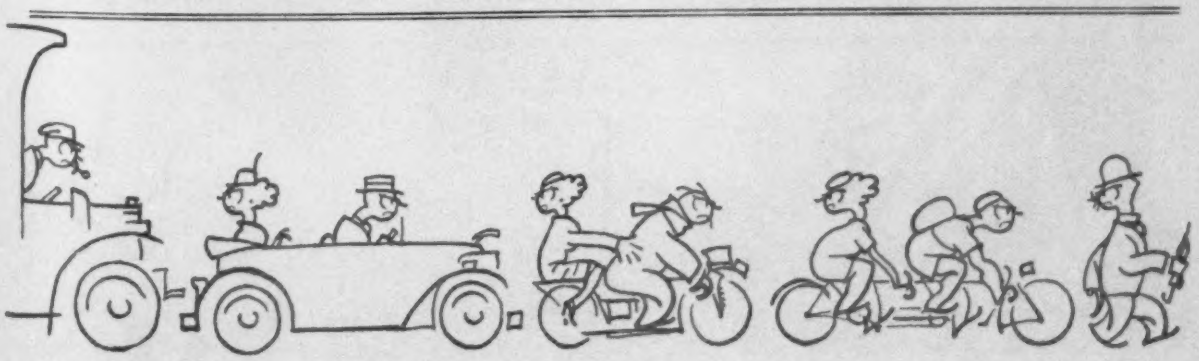
"At a loss, I shouldn't wonder," the other grumbled. "Well, how was I to know the old lady would all of a sudden decide that? The trouble is the others won't move a step without her. And here she goes gaily saddlin' me with three s——"

"Three seats?" Mr. Kibitzer ejaculated. "Three good seats, boy?"

The man with the carved pipe said, Yes. *He* didn't want all the bother of turning them in again, formalities and such, he'd far rather let some pal have 'em, even though he probably ought not to do anything of the kind.

Mr. Kibitzer let it be known that he was the pal in question. The whole thing was done in a quarter-of-an-hour, but even in so short a time he was able to get into the stout man's head the idea that he, Mr. Kibitzer, was performing this beneficent act only because he had taken a fancy to him. He got the tickets for five pounds each. The two conspirators agreed that no doubt they were going against the regulations, but Mr. Kibitzer was confident of his ability to avoid any unpleasantness. "An unseen power watches over old man Kibitzer," he declared. Wasn't this proof of it?

He inflated his chest, lit a new cigar and strutted back for the admiration of his assistants. "Boy!" he cried. "Do I show 'em! There isn't another man alive who'd have gone to all this trouble. Without me our three poor pals from Portugal"—pleased with this phrase, he repeated it—"our three poor pals from Portugal wouldn't have seen a





"NOT HERE, OLD BOY, PLEASE. THE PLATES ARE NEVER HOT."

flicker of the show. They put their troubles in the hands of old man Kibitzer and he performs wonders. Hell, I never took so much trouble since Stanley Goop's daughter, what's her name, Sally, since Sally Goop's young man's chicken-farm caught fire on the night of September 18, 1932. Impressive, that's what it is, friends —impressive."

His assistants gazed at him coldly throughout this impassioned speech rather as if they were other members of an orchestra and he were a soloist overstaying his cadenza. Finally when he ceased speaking and began to brush the cigar-ash off his clothes the translator put up a languid hand and said, "Oy! Have you had your say?"

"Sure, boy," Mr. Kibitzer said affably, bending down to dust his shoes with a handkerchief.

"Well, I think I'd better tell you I've looked at the letter again," said the translator, picking it up. "I never noticed the P.S. on the back. It explains they've got seats all right; what they want is help in getting to them because little Manuel is going to bring his bicycle."

Mr. Kibitzer slowly straightened up. He told himself he felt like NAPOLEON at Austerloo. He sat down and nodded sadly.

"Little Manuel's bicycle, eh," he observed at length. After another pause he looked up keenly. "You don't either of you happen to want three good seats for the . . .?"





"... AND AT THE BACK OF THE STAGE I THOUGHT WE MIGHT HAVE OUR OWN PAGEANT OF EMPIRE."



"ALBERT, I'M SURE THE DEAR KING AND QUEEN WOULDN'T WISH US TO STAND TO ATTENTION *ALL* THE TIME."

The Opener

To the Earl of Spentmoor, K.G.

March 3rd.

MY LORD,—On behalf of the Little Wobbley Coronation Committee we have the honour to invite your Lordship to perform the opening ceremony of our Coronation Village Hall on May 15th, and to be present afterwards at the Grand Gala and Coronation Sports in the grounds of the Vicarage. Our Committee were unanimously of opinion that your family's long connection with this neighbourhood put it beyond all doubt that your Lordship was *par excellence* the proper person to ask to undertake this honourable duty.

HORATIO HOGG, *Chairman.*
L. CONKLESHILL, *Secretary.*

To Sir Bravado Beefing, Bart., M.P.

March 15th.

DEAR SIR,—At a recent meeting of the Little Wobbley Coronation Committee it was unanimously decided to ask you to perform the opening ceremony of our Coronation Village Hall on May 15th. Afterwards there will be a Grand Gala and Coronation Sports in the grounds of the Vicarage, and we would be extremely grateful if you could persuade Lady Beefing to present the prizes at the latter. Our Committee were unanimously of the opinion that our Member of Parliament was the fit and proper person to be invited to undertake this honourable duty, and we trust you will see your way to accept.

HORATIO HOGG, *Chairman.*
L. CONKLESHILL, *Secretary.*

To Cicely Cowslip, Authoress.

March 25th.

DEAR MISS COWSLIP,—At a recent meeting of our Coronation Committee it was unanimously decided that Literature should be asked to perform





"How 's that, M'Gugi?"
"Rather sweet—a little on the quiet side, perhaps."

the opening ceremony of our Coronation Village Hall on May 15th, and who could represent Literature so well in Little Wobbley as the authoress of *The Yellow Lily*, *The Pink Primrose* and *The Crinkled Cauliflower*, those delightful romances of tender passion whose background is our own sweet countryside?

We hope that after the opening ceremony you will stay for the Grand Gala in the Vicarage gardens and also present the prizes at the Coronation Sports.

HORATIO HOGG, *Chairman*.
L. CONKLESHILL, *Secretary*.

To L. Conkleshill, Esq.

April 9th.

DEAR CONKLESHILL,—I suppose the reason we can't get anybody to open our Coronation Hall is that all the nobility and gentry will be up in London for the big shows. I shan't be at the Committee meeting to-night, but I hope you'll be able to fix on somebody who will do the job, even if it means handing it over to some local nincompoop who only *thinks* he's important.

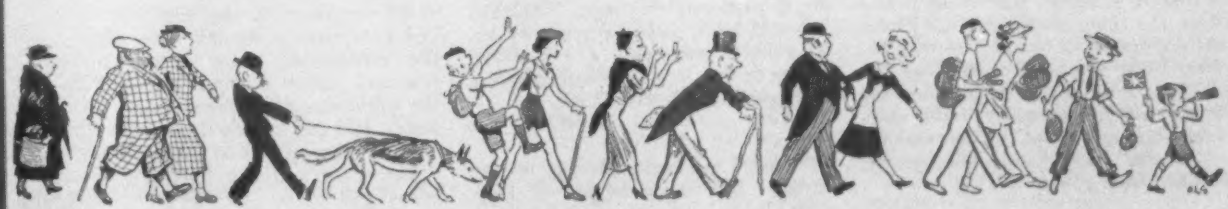
HORATIO HOGG.

To Colonel Horatio Hogg

April 10th.

DEAR HOGG,—I am sorry you were not present at the meeting of the Coronation Committee last night, especially as we decided unanimously that after your long service in the parish you were the only possible person to ask to open the Coronation Hall on May 15th. We should be doubly grateful if you could persuade Mrs. Hogg to present the prizes at the Sports.

L. CONKLESHILL, *Secretary*.





"MIND YOUR BACKS, PLEASE — DECORATIONS!"

About It and About

"HOW would it be?" I asked, "if I were to write a poem about the Coronation?"

"Bad, I should think," Laura replied without hesitation. "Besides, if you're thinking of the Parish Magazine it's no use. They've got millions already. Old Mrs. Pysie has done one about QUEEN VICTORIA'S Coronation. You see she *almost* might have been there, and she remembers KING EDWARD THE SEVENTH'S and KING GEORGE THE FIFTH'S, so that this is practically her fourth."

"She might have thrown in KING WILLIAM while she was about it and done the thing properly. But I have no slightest wish to interfere with old Mrs. Pysie and the Parish Magazine. All I want to do is to write something loyal, witty, informative and absolutely original, about the Coronation."

"I see," said Laura intelligently. "When shall you do it?"

I replied with some reserve that I didn't know. I was as a matter of fact waiting—as one so often does—for an idea that—as it so often doesn't—hadn't come.

Weeks passed and *still* it hadn't come. And when at last it made its tardy arrival the idea elected to pass me by and descend upon Laura.

We were on our way to tea with the Battlegates when she uttered: "I've thought of something. You know you want an idea about the Coronation?"

"A *good* idea. Yes."

"I'll tell you how you can get millions of them, and then you can choose out the best and work it up. You know how sticky it always is at the Battlegates? Well, in the middle of tea, when we're all talking about the Coronation, which we're sure to do, I shall suddenly say, 'What fun it would be to make up a Coronation Alphabet!' and with a very little egging on they're all absolutely certain to begin suggesting things."

"You mean like K stands for King?"

"Well, I call that a tiny bit obvious myself. But that's the sort of thing. I think it's a marvellous scheme. It'll practically do the whole of your work for you."

"And the whole of the Battlegates' work for them too," I pointed out. "Like those things that are advertised for parties that keep the whole table in a roar."

Seated at the Battlegates' tea-table with the Canon, Mr. and Mrs. Battlegate, little Ernest and his catarrh, old Lady Flagge, poor Miss Flagge, and Mrs. Battlegate's tea-planter cousin just recovering from a bad bout of malaria, one quite felt how splendid it would be when Laura and the Coronation Alphabet set the whole table in a roar.

It didn't however happen quite like that.

Laura, I could see, was nonplussed at the very start by the extraordinary and unnatural obstinacy with which the Battlegates, their friends and relations, talked about everything in the world *except* the Coronation. One might, had one known them less well, have supposed them to be anarchists.

The Canon and Mrs. Battlegate discussed golf.



"Is this t' reet road t' Bookin'am Palace?"

Mrs. Battlegate told Miss Flagge about a marriage which wasn't turning out very well between a friend of hers and a young man from Australia who wanted a job on the films.

Old Lady Flagge asked me about rock-plants and then quickly went on to describe her own, and little Ernest just handed cake and bread-and-butter to everybody with a zeal that suggested, to the experienced eye of a mother, a desire to divert attention from the plate of sandwiches.

Laura, apparently lending an attentive ear to the malarial cousin, certainly did her best.

I distinctly heard her say, in reply to the cousin's doubtless very interesting remarks about turbine engines, "Oh, that reminds me! *Have* you seen those pictures of the decorations they're going to put up in Bond Street for the Coronation?"

"No," said the cousin, "I can't say I have. But it really is a remarkable thing about this new twin-screw——"

Laura interrupted him with a rather wild forced laugh. "It sounds so like *thumb*-screw. Like the Tower of London, you know. I suppose one's mind can't help running on Beef-eaters and things just now."

It was impossible to blame the cousin for the startled look that came into his face, or even for hastily moving his chair some few feet further away from Laura's neighbourhood.

"The Tower of London, are you talking about?" said Miss Flagge, looking kindly at Ernest. "And what about the Zoo, dear?"

"Zoo is almost the *only* word that's any use when one wants to begin with Z," said Laura with astonishing rapidity. "I mean, if one's making up an alphabet or anything like that."

There was a rather stunned silence, broken by Mrs. Battlegate—a good hostess.

"There's always Zebra," she suggested kindly. "Do let me give you some more tea."

"No, thank you," said Laura wretchedly.

"We were saying not so very long ago how amusing it would be to make up a Coronation Alphabet," I said. (Not that it did sound in the very least amusing.) "I think that must be what Laura has in mind."

It showed how completely Laura's nerve had broken that she then earnestly and eagerly exclaimed: "K for King, you know."

"Oh, yes, so it does. But do have another cup," urged Mrs. Battlegate.

"I always like paper-games, I must say," observed old Lady Flagge. "K for King, yes. Most ingenious. And of course Q for Queen, I suppose?"

No one attempted to deny it.

"But really," said the Canon, "there's nothing like the good old-fashioned game of Consequences. Provided of course that it's played in the right company and not in the wrong."

And then Lady Flagge began again about the rock-plants.

Laura on the way home said that she supposed we'd been definitely in the wrong company so far as getting new ideas about the Coronation went.

"You did your best," I said.

And next day I sat down at the writing-table and did mine.



AN EASE-LOVING PATRIOT SETTLES DOWN TO ENJOY THE PROCESSION.

Loyal Letters to the Secretary of a Golf Club

From General Sir Armstrong Forcursue, K.B.E., C.S.I., The Cedars, Rough-over.

Wednesday, 7th April, 1937.

DEAR WHELK,—In view of the approaching Coronation, kindly note that I intend giving a Cup to the Club to be played for annually on each anniversary of the 12th day of May. The Competition to be eighteen holes stroke on handicap.

Owing to the fact that this year I, in common with a great many members of the Club, will be going to see the Coronation, I would suggest the event be held on Tuesday, 20th April.

I shall order the Cup when I am next in Town. I intend to have it inscribed: "GENERAL SIR ARMSTRONG FORCURSUE'S CORONATION CUP."

Yours sincerely,
ARMSTRONG FORCURSUE.

From General Sir Armstrong Forcursue, K.B.E., C.S.I., The Cedars, Rough-over.

Friday, 9th April, 1937.

DEAR WHELK,—I am glad you



approve of the Cup, but your suggested further inscription, to the effect that it is in memory of the various offices held by me at the Roughover Golf Club, does not appeal. I prefer to forget them, largely because it would remind me of your constant incompetence.

Your remarks about the wording of my inscription (*i.e.*, "General Armstrong Forcursue's Coronation Cup") and that people will think it is *my* coronation is so much poppycock. No one but a fool like you would give the matter a second's thought.

Unless I can do things my own way I withdraw my offer.

Yours faithfully,
ARMSTRONG FORCURSUE.

P.S.—If you decide to yield to my requirements, please circularise members about the competition, so as to get a good turn-out.

P.S. 2.—I feel we might charge five shillings entrance fee, the proceeds to be given to the King George V. National Memorial Fund.

From Ephraim Wobblegoose (House-Steward to Roughover Golf Club), now on short holiday at the "Yellow Boar" Hotel, Trudgett Magna.

12th April.

DEAR SIR,—I saw in the local paper that the General is to give a Coronation Cup, and Sir I have been thinking a lot about it while enjoying my holiday here; for, Sir, we must try and make that day a big success and no mistake, and have the Club House decorated good and royally.

I am also planning a new cocktail for the period of the Coronation with the aid of the landlord of this establishment, and it is to be called the "Red, White and Blue"; and so far we had got claret for the "red" and gin for the "white," but the "blue" has us beat to date and has put us in a rare sweat, ink being the only liquor we can think about for this colour. But maybe ink would be O.K., for the General and the rest of the Big Four is always complaining the Club wines taste of it, and maybe they wouldn't notice the difference what with their palates being all ruined with that there foreign service.

Hoping this finds you in the pink,
Yours, Sir,
E. WOBBLEGOOSE.



"IT AIN'T MY FAULT, SIR, I 'AVE TO APPEAR IN THIS RIG—THE PRINTER 'AS GOT ALL MIXED UP WITH 'IS COLOURS."

From Frank Plantain, Greenkeeper Roughover Golf Club.

13/4/37.

DEAR SIR,—Hearing that Harry Cleek (Professional) is selling patriotic coloured golf umbrellas and tees in his shop, I was feeling we should do our bit for the General's Comp. by having the flags on the putting-greens red, white and blue. The groundsmen were thinking my idea would look all right; so if you approve, please order same.

Yours faithfully,
FRANK PLANTAIN.

From General Sir Armstrong Forcursue, K.B.E., C.S.I., The Cedars, Roughover.

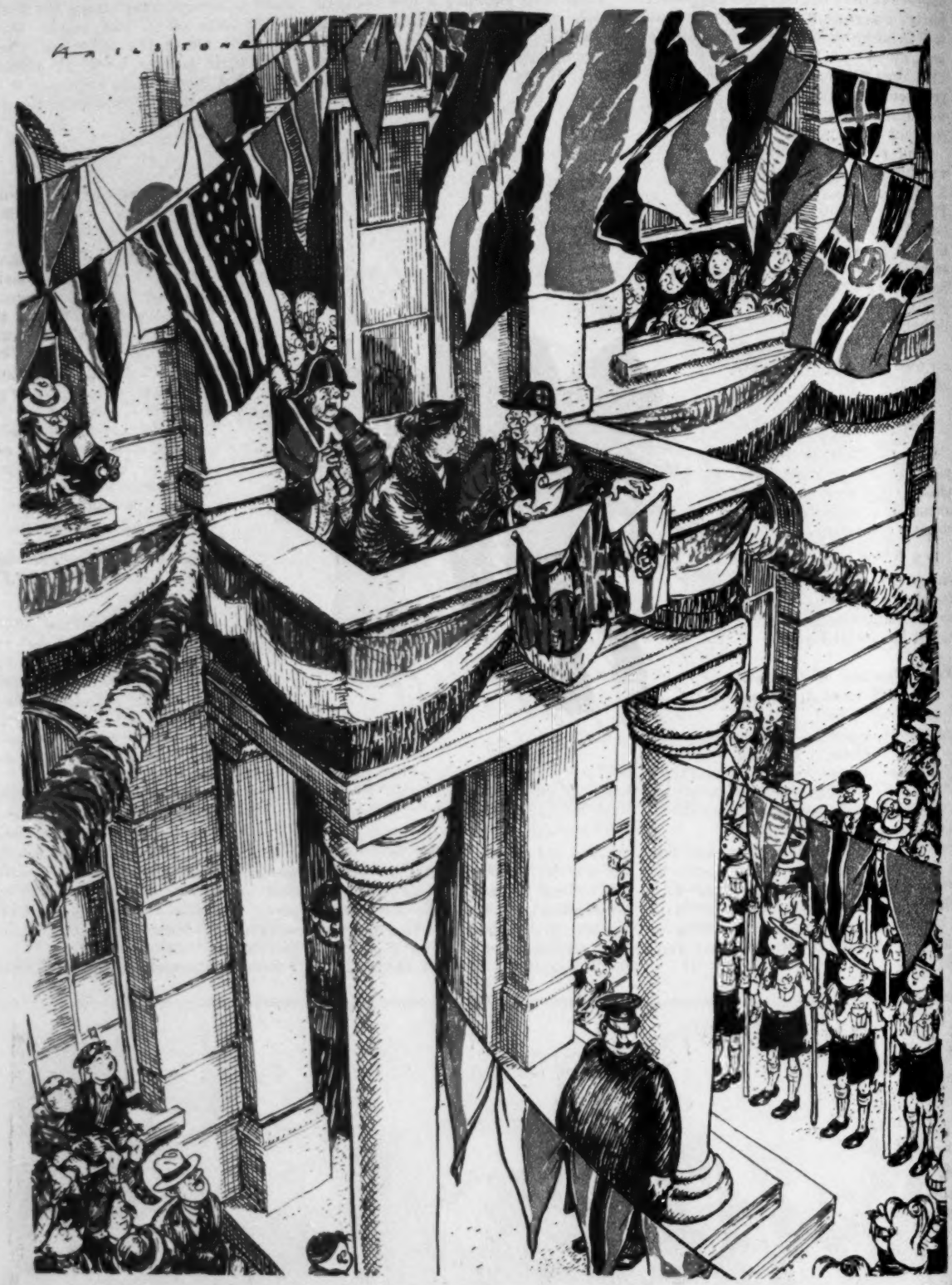
Thursday, 15rd April, 1937.

DEAR WHELK,—I am very glad to hear that the entries are coming in so well, but am rather astonished that Nutmeg and Admiral Sneyring-Stymie have sent such rude letters with their refusal to compete.

This does not altogether surprise me, however, for I have always thought their hearts were definitely in the wrong place, and this simply goes to prove that patriotism is not their strong point. Candidly I would not be a bit surprised if both were found to be dabbling in Communism.

Between you and me, though, the real





"....AND DON'T FORGET, DEAR, TO MENTION THE EMPIRE."



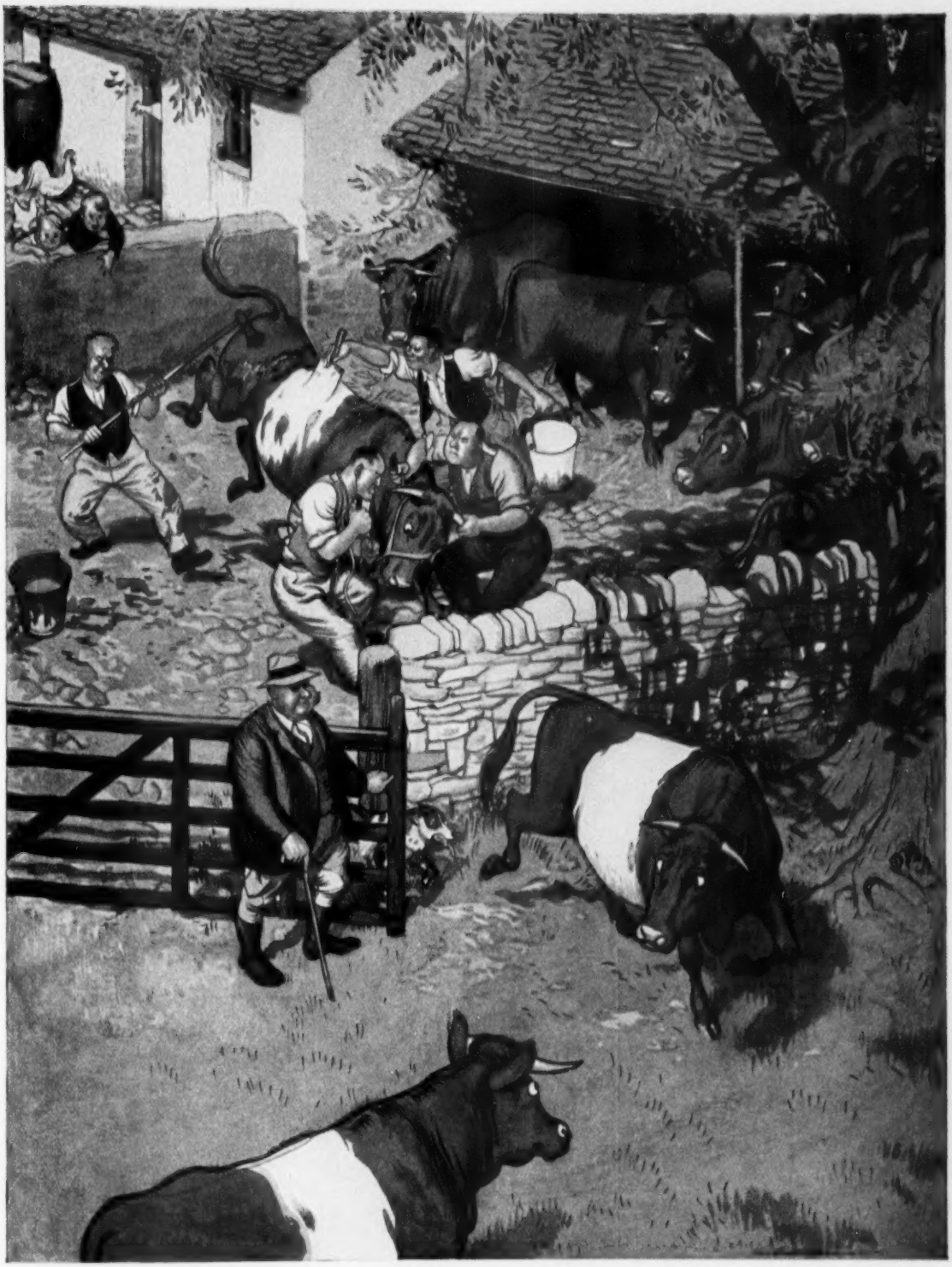
"YOU MUST HAVE THIS BRIDGE REPAIRED IN TIME FOR THE PROCESSION NEXT MONDAY. THERE WILL PROBABLY BE ELEPHANTS."


LONDON TRANSPORT
1737
SHALL WE GO GEORGIAN?


Old Elizabethan



"WELL, HERE'S TO THE EMPIRE, EVEN IF THE SUN *DOES* NEVER SET ON IT."



OUR VILLAGE ANTI-RED

FARMER SPRINGWHEAT SEES TO IT THAT THE DEVONS GRAZING THE CORONATION SPORTS FIELD WILL PRESENT A COLOUR-SCHEME IN KEEPING WITH THE PATRIOTIC OCCASION.



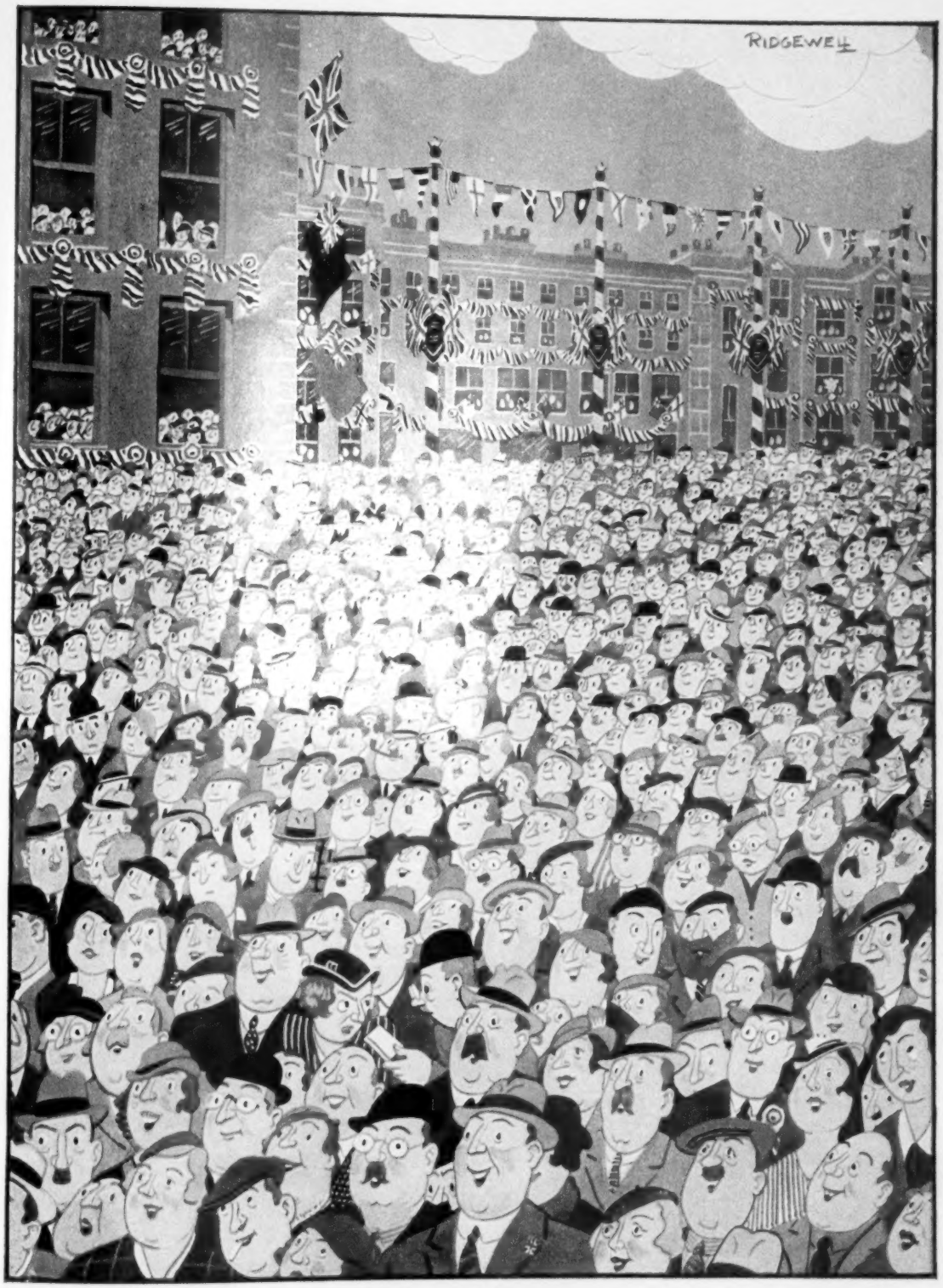
"THEY'RE COMIN' NAH, 'ORACE—LET 'IM 'EAR YER."



"LONG LIVE THEIR



VE THEIR MAJESTIES!"

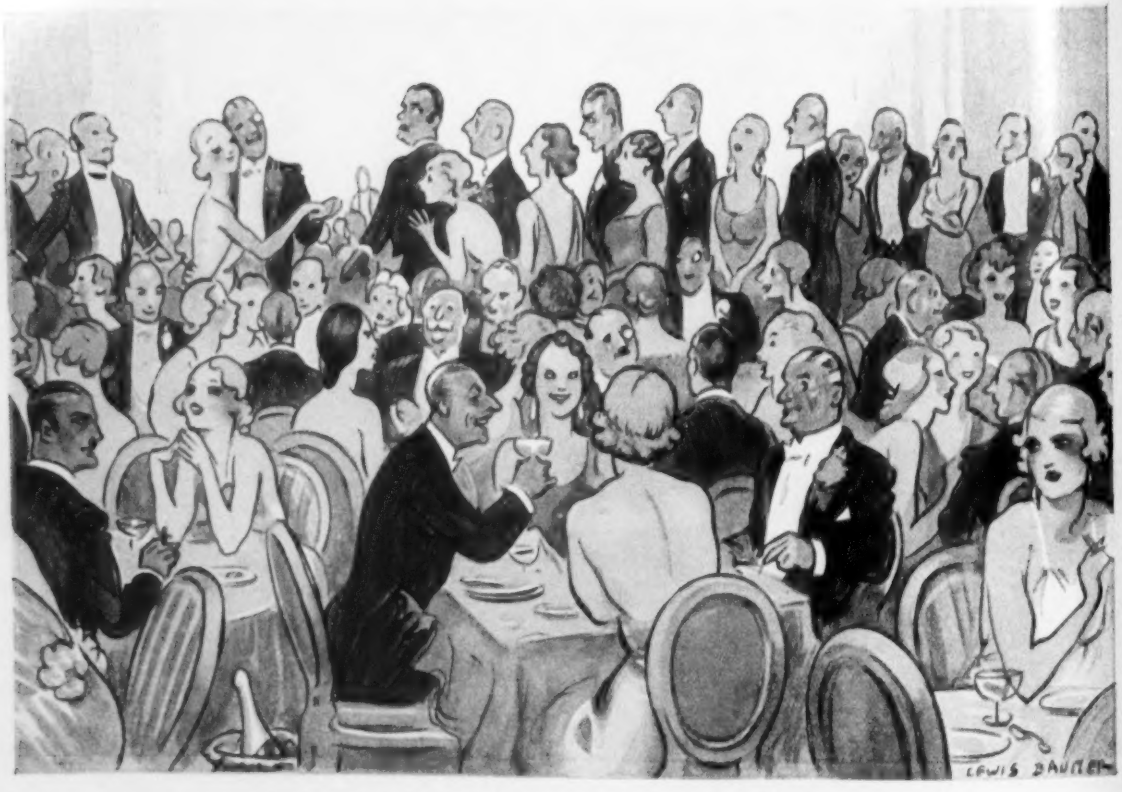


"NO, HAROLD, I DO NOT WANT A SARDINE SANDWICH!"

OVERCROWDING IN MAYFAIR



THE LAST AVAILABLE TABLE

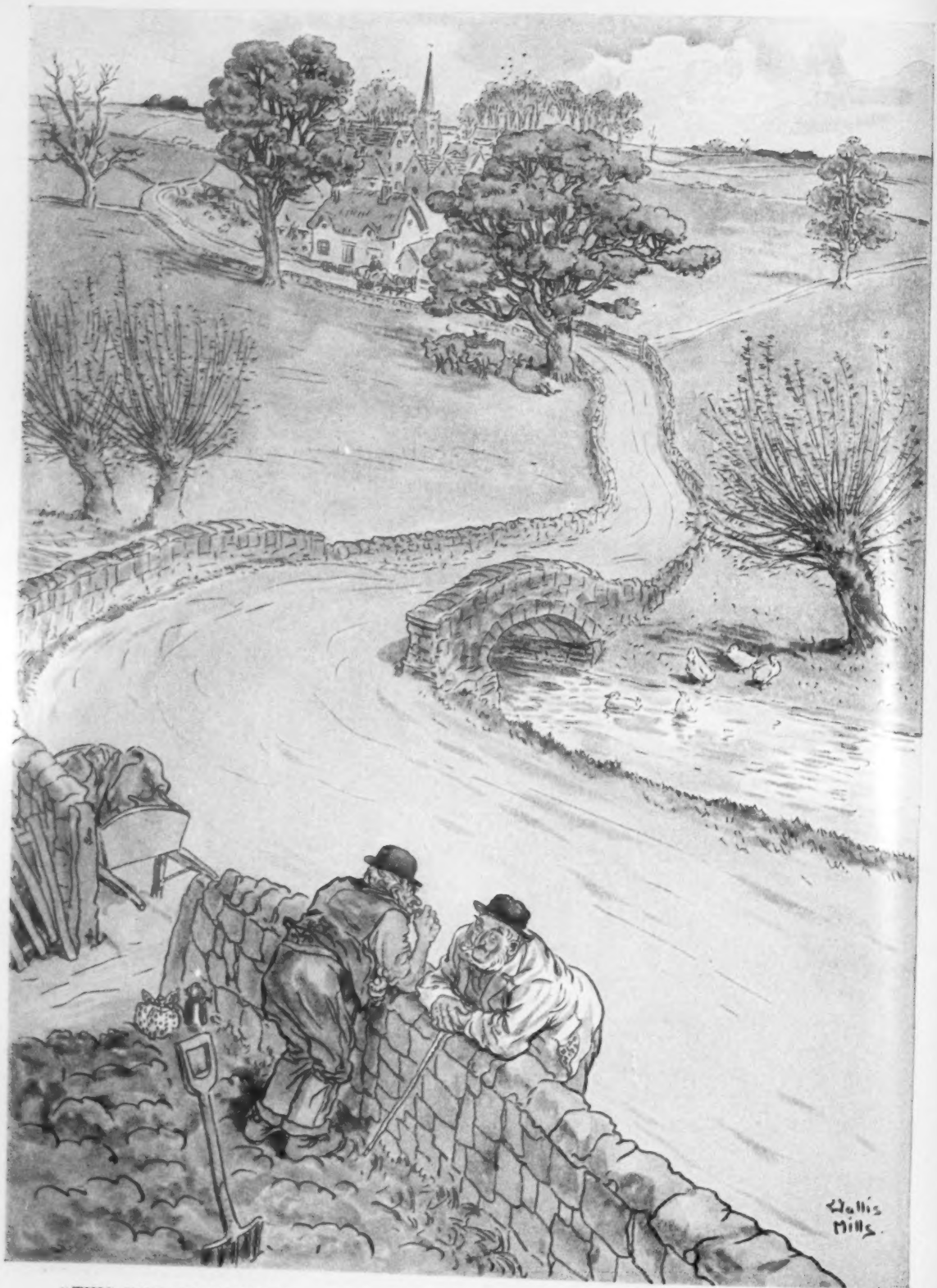


QUEUEING UP FOR A TURN ON THE DANCE-FLOOR

OVERCROWDING IN MAYFAIR



"I CAN ARRANGE A PLACE FOR TWO ON THE FIFTH STEP, SIR."



"THIS 'ERE CORONATION—WE A-DOIN' IT AT THE 'PIG AN' WHISTLE' AS USUAL?"



SOME SPECIAL EFFORTS

ALL HANDS WASH FLAGS IN THE ROYAL NAVY.



THE FLOWERS AND THE PRINCESSES

reasons for their not competing are (*a*) In Stymie's case, because he is jealous I returned a 2 down to his 3 down in the March Bogey; and (*b*) In Nutmeg's case, because I always take care to get *The Times* before he does in the morning and keep it until after he goes out to play.

However, owing to the fact that Coronation time is a period when petty differences should be waived, I have by this post made a big-hearted gesture and have written and asked them both not to be so childish and to let bygones be bygones.

Yours sincerely,

ARMSTRONG FORCURSUE.

P.S.—Let me know if they do not enter for my Cup, when I shall have much pleasure in blackmailing them, Nutmeg having broken four Club Rules since March 3rd and Stymie seven during the past week.

From General Sir Armstrong Forcursue, K.B.E., C.S.I., The Cedars, Roughover.

Tuesday, 20th April, 1937.

DEAR WHELK,—Thank you for sending round to my house the results of the Coronation Cup. I was sorry I could not stay on this afternoon to see the last pairs come in, but I had to go and preside at a meeting of the British Legion.

It is an extraordinary coincidence that out of such a big entry and in view of their original attitude Nutmeg and Stymie should have tied for first place. However, we have, I think, provided for the event of a tie; and the play-off, if I remember rightly, will be on Thursday.

Regarding this, kindly note that I shall referee the game and I shall be on the 1st tee at 10 A.M. sharp. After the match I intend to stand host to all and sundry, so have some sandwiches cut and ample drinks, etc. I am also getting the Legion band to come down and play some patriotic airs from 12.30 to 1.30 P.M.

Yours sincerely,

ARMSTRONG FORCURSUE.

P.S.—I am sorry you will not be there.



"'LO, PEGGY! YOU ALONE?"

From John Baggs, Caddie-master, Roughover Golf Club.

22/4/37.

DEAR SIR,—Well, Sir, you missed a fair treat in the play-off for the Coronation Cup between Mr. Nutmeg and the Admiral, for the General was there looking after them and I thought you'd like to know how it went.

Well, Sir, on the 1st tee the Admiral was wearing a small Union Jack in his button-hole, and Mr. Nutmeg complained that its fluttering would put him off his shot, but the General ruled him out of order and that he had no love of his country. And so it went on, for the next thing was that the Admiral complained about the red, white





FLOODLIGHTING IMPORTANT BUILDINGS

and blue tie Mr. Nutmeg's caddie had put on for the great occasion; but the General in turn gave *him* a rare telling-off, reminding him of his old rank in the Navy, to everyone's great delight.

But, Sir, the golf was not good, as you might imagine, for the crowd was a big one and everyone doing a lot of barracking just to rile them both; and when Ginger Sunk shouted out, "Poor old Hornpipe!" when the Admiral missed a short putt at the eighth, the latter heard it and got a whole lot of pent-up words off his chest; and Sir, I hope the reporters never heard in spite of the fact that it was powerful human.

Well, Sir, the end was real exciting, for they was all square on the 18th tee, but the Admiral was then too good for Mr. N. and got a fine 8 to the other's 9. But it was then that things began to happen, for suddenly a dog with a red, white and blue ribbon round its neck that had got frightened when it saw the big drummer's leopard-skin, rushed out and bit Admiral Stymie on the leg, just to put him in his place like. And a terrible situation there was, for the Admiral, being that overcome with the dog's attention, raised his putter to strike the first thing he saw, which was the General and Mr. Nutmeg, who were arguing away just in front of him. But, Sir, it was all Oke, for at the crucial moment the band struck up the National Anthem and everyone came to attention, the Admiral included. And when it was





Proud Mother. "'E'S GONE ALL CORONATION-LIKE."

over the Admiral had cooled off and recollected he had his appearances to keep up, and he walked round and shook everyone by the hand as if nothing had happened; but all the same he rubbed his leg a lot.

So, Sir, that was the end of the first Coronation Cup and a day I'll not forget, though I live to see the next century.

Your obedient servant,
JOHN BAGGS.

From General Sir Armstrong Forcursue, K.B.E., C.S.I., The Cedars, Rough-over.

Friday, 23rd April, 1937.

DEAR WHELK,—I cannot recollect having ever congratulated you for anything before, but on this occasion—the occasion of my Coronation Cup—I feel it only just that you should receive my warm thanks for the arrangements which you and the Staff made, both in the Club House and on the links. The way the dog bit Stymie was absolutely superb.

Yours very sincerely,
ARMSTRONG FORCURSUE.

P.S.—I liked Wobblegoose's new cocktail. Find out for me what it was made of. He said it was a Club Secret.

P.S. 2.—You must get a new suit of clothes for Coronation Day. That ghastly rig-out you come to church in simply won't do.



Old Giles Silvertop and the Young Queen's Crownation

"I CAN'T 'ardly 'elp smiling," said Mr. Silvertop, "at what a posh show we makes of a modern Crownation, with 'arf London looking like Barnum and Bailey's, when I thinks of 'ow much quieter QUEEN VIC'S 'ow-d'-you-do was, only a 'undred year ago. You could almost count on your two 'ands the blokes what came up for that by rail, and even by coach there wasn't more than what you could pack into a decent-sized picture-'ouse. Very different sort of a do it was, and no mistake."

"Don't tell me you were there," I begged him.

"No, I wasn't, but the family was represented, at least they was in a manner of speaking. You see, my great-grand-dad, old Giles Silvertop, 'e was a great student of 'istory and suchlike, in spite of 'is being a farmer, and 'e ses to my great-grandma, 'The young Queen won't be coronated proper if old Giles isn't there to give 'er a cheer, and you must come too.' 'Me come?' she ses. 'And 'oo's a-going to poultice that there sick cow?' 'One of the lads can see to 'er,' ses 'e. 'I'd like to see 'em,' she ses. 'She'd be beef on 'em within five minutes. You go if you will, but I'm staying.'

"Well, old Giles dolled 'imself up in 'is best tweeds and put a flower in 'is 'at, and the day before the Crownation 'e come up from Sussex on the outside of one of them racing coaches, streamline—I don't think! By the time 'e gets to the pub in Cheapside where 'e was a-staying 'e was pretty well solid with dust, so 'e goes in to the Tap and orders a pint, just to make a start at laying it. As you might guess, the place was crammed.

"Old Giles found 'imself a-standing beside a tall 'andsome gent with a diamond on 'is finger and a quick way with beer. 'You up from the country for to-morrow's little do?' asks the gent. 'That's it,' ses Giles, 'couldn't let it 'appen without coming and waving my 'at at the young lady, bless 'er!' 'It does me a power of good to meet a reel patriot,' ses the gent. 'There's cursed few of us about these days. What's yours?' 'Well, thankee,' ses Giles, 'mine's a beer.' 'A man's drink,' the gent 'e ses, 'and there's too few of them about too. What part are you from?' 'Sheepwash, in Sussex.' 'Not *Sheepwash*?' asks the gent. 'Why, 'oo's the squire there now?' 'Sir 'Enery Bowles,' ses Giles. 'E was born at the Manor 'Ouse, and a kinder landlord never stepped.' 'There's no need to tell me,' ses the gent, 'for I was at Eton with 'im. Many's the time I've stayed down at Sheepwash for the shooting. Grand days those was, with 'Enery, and 'eaps of birds.'

"'Well, I never,' ses Giles, 'what a perishing little ant-'ill the world is! Fancy you knowing the Squire!' 'Is the shooting still good?' asks the gent. 'Good enough, but of course not what it was,' answers Giles, being a farmer. 'And what's your name?' asks the gent. 'Mr. Giles Silvertop, farmer,' Giles tells 'im. 'And yours?' The gent put 'is mouth close to Giles' 'ear confidential-like, and ses, 'I don't want the riff-raff in 'ere to know it, but mine's Lord Charles Truffle.' 'Corlumme!' exclaims Giles. 'You don't say?' 'Yes,' 'e goes on, 'my father's the old Earl of Shoreditch, but don't let that worry you. It's time we 'ad these filled up. Look 'ere, Silvertop, it's 'ellish lucky you and me 'ave met, for you're a bloke after my own 'eart. Are you fixed up for to-morrow?' 'Well, no, I'm not, milord. I'm just a-going to stand out on the route somewhere.' 'No milords, please, I'm *in cog*. Do you know the route?' 'No,' Giles admits, 'not yet.' 'Well, you might very easy find yourself somewhere that's 'opeless for seeing. Tell you what, you must join my party. It so 'appens I've just took a new town mansion which the QUEEN, Gawd bless 'er! 'll pass on 'er drive. Several of my friends are coming, and you'll see 'Er Majesty lovely. You won't mind there being no furniture in the 'ouse.' 'Course I won't,' ses Giles, 'I 'ardly knows 'ow to thank you as it is.' 'It's nothing at all,' ses Lord Charles.

"Well, they 'as a long jaw together about Sheepwash, and at last the drinks, which 'ad been mounting up, 'ave to be paid for. 'On me,' ses 'is Nibs, 'if you're only up for a day or two I dare say you 'aven't brought much ready to spare.' 'I've plenty, reelly,' Giles tells 'im. 'I've brought twenty pound so I can buy the Missus a few things what she's been thinking on a long time.' 'All the more reason you shouldn't blow it on beer,' ses Lord Charles. 'Now, remember—outside 'ere at nine in the morning.'

"Old Giles was up early to make sure 'e was looking 'is best—'e was a fine old boy, with a great red beard on 'im—and sharp at nine a cab pulls up with Lord Charles and three other gents aboard. 'This is my friend Mr. Giles Silvertop,' 'e ses to 'em, ''oo's going to honour us with 'is company. And these are the Marquis of Blackchapel, Lord 'Erbert Mangle and Sir Roger Potman.' 'Pleased to meet your lordships,' ses old Giles. 'Very pleased too,' they all ses; and off they goes.

"After driving a goodish step they fetches up at a 'uge barrack of an 'ouse, and 'is lordship lets 'em in with 'is key. 'E 'ad a basket with 'im with bottles and sandwiches, and 'e passes round cigars. 'We'll go in the dining-room, boys,' 'e ses, 'and wait for the procession. It won't be parst 'ere yet awhile. 'Erbert, you see to the drinks. I expect Mr. Silvertop'll 'ave a whisky.'





"PLEASE, CONSTABLE, I 'M LOST, AND MOTHER SAYS WOULD YOU PLEASE PUT ME ON YOUR SHOULDER WHEN THE PROCESSION COMES ALONG?"

"'Much obliged,' ses old Giles. 'It's wonderful quiet 'ere, seeing it's on the route.' 'You know why that is,' ses Lord Charles, 'that's because some of the best-class streets 'ave been put out of bounds to the crowds, so as the 'ouse'olders can see 'Er Majesty in peace.' 'Did you ever?' ses Giles. 'What a powerful lot I'll 'ave to tell the folks down in Sheepwash when I gets back!'

"Well, pore old chap, 'e never ses a truer word, for the next thing 'e knew 'e woke up 'arf dead with cold to find 'imself lying on the dining-room floor in 'is shirt and trousers. There was a steam-'ammer working overtime in 'is 'ead and the dawn was just breaking, and the only satisfaction 'e 'ad was knowing the peerage wasn't out of pocket, for 'is twenty quid would more than cover the dope they'd stood 'im.

"Peerage! Corlumme! Footpadage more like! They was a well-known gang in a smallish way, and old Giles got off light, for all four of 'em swung a few years after for doing a couple of blokes in down on the marshes. So you see what I mean when I ses in a manner of speaking the family 'ad its representative at QUEEN VIC'S Crown-ation. Although, in a manner of speaking, it 'adn't." ERIC.





Hostess. "And you know how to announce his Grace?"
New Butler. "Perfectly, Madam; I may perhaps require assistance with some of your—er—smaller fry."

Nature Poem for 1937

How once this prospect would show dull and drear
  Wordsworth, no doubt, might tell us in the circs.
How different since this reservoir came here,
  Built by the Corporation Waterworks!

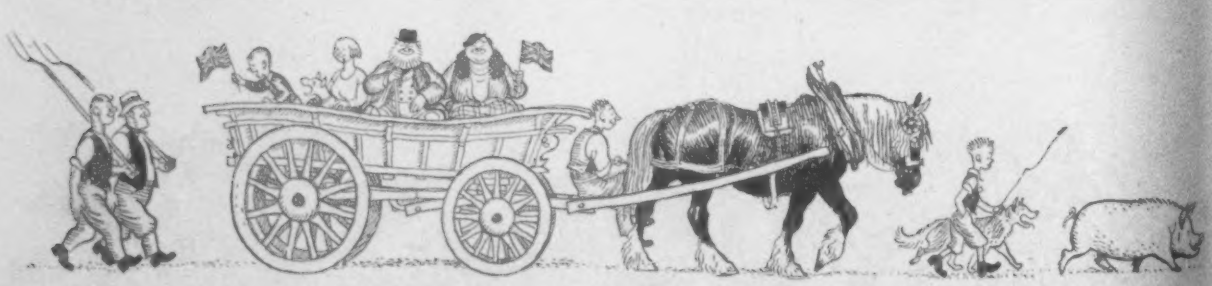
O shapely lovely lake, how many taps,
  How many miles away, do you allow
Share of your endless bounty? Why, perhaps,
  She whom I love is bathing in you now.

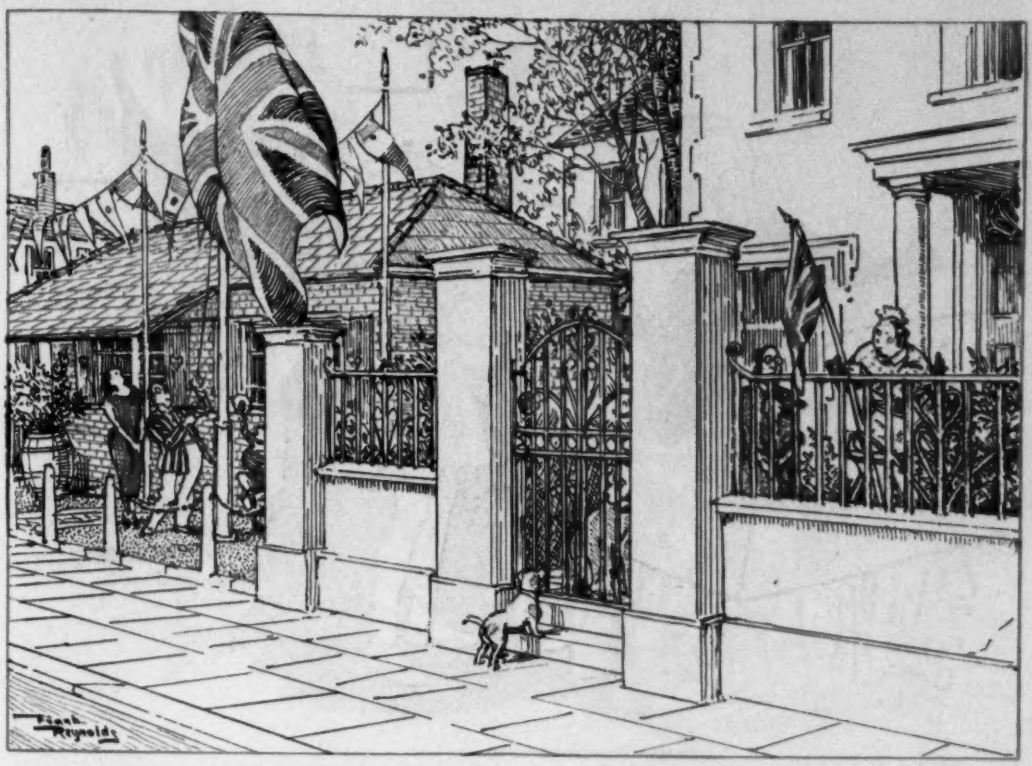
Then see beyond where your fair surface shines
  For Nature's child is inspiration still:
See where those high-held telephonic lines,
  Braced to the wind, go singing o'er the hill.

Hear how the messages fly to and fro;
  Here's the true magic of the countryside.
Who live in town how little do they know
  The beat of winging words o'er spaces wide!

Yet, hark, what further rural music stirs:
  Happy indeed is Nature's lover now!
What voice but this is more divinely hers?—
  The deep-toned murmur of the tractor plough.

Though, more than thine, there is a voice that sums
  The wakeful spirit of man's new abode:
Listen where faintly on the wind it comes,
  The eternal whisper of the arterial road.





BUNTING TIME

Mental Jerks

NOTHING could be more encouraging to the lover of the human race than the way in which the newspapers have backed up the campaign to make us all more physically fit. Scarcely a daily or weekly paper but has its "own reporter"—not, they are careful to point out, anybody else's—busy on his hands and knees crawling his way to fitness for the benefit of his recumbent readers. Doctors are continually being called in to certify to this effect:—

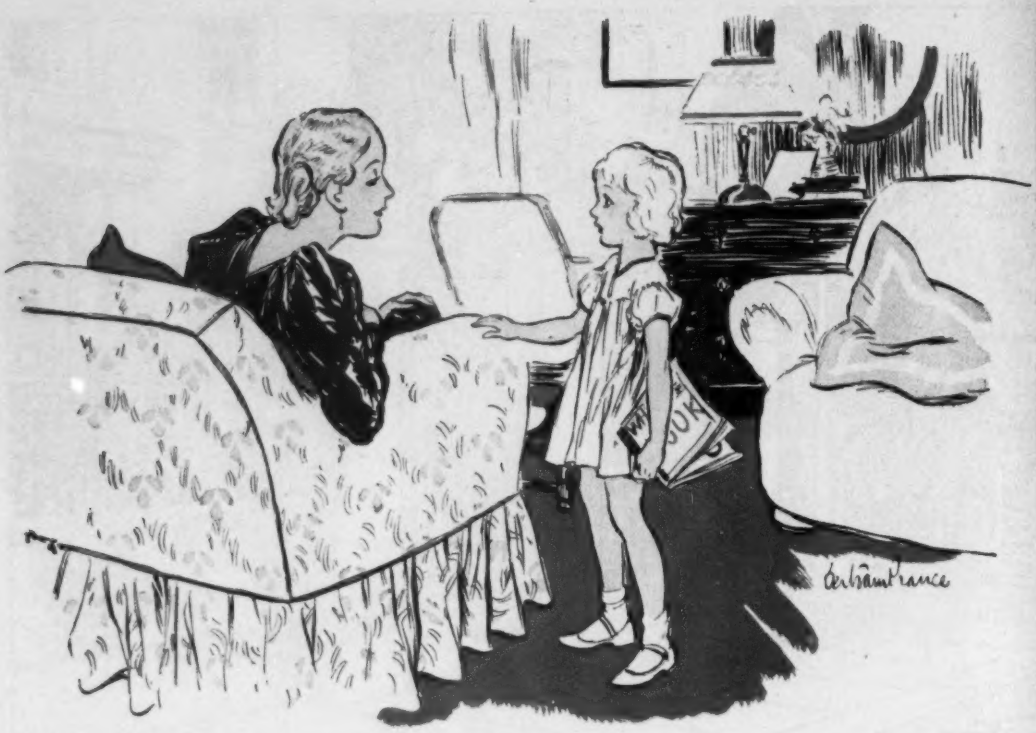
"I have examined Mr. Dash and found him just about the poorest specimen of manhood I ever set eyes on. His chest expansion is *nil*, he breathes through his ears, apparently, and he has no muscular development. I asked him to break a match-stick in two, but he couldn't do it. I don't know what his pulse is like; I couldn't find it. (*Signed*) ——."

A month later the astonished physician issues another report:—

"I have now examined Mr. Dash again and am astonished at the difference in him. He has a chest expansion of six inches and can breathe heavily through his nose. I offered him a match-stick and he broke it quite easily with his bare hands. He hardly seems the same man. In fact, judging by the photograph shown of him before he did his exercises, I don't think he is the same man. (*Signed*) ——."

All of which is excellent but seems to leave a gap somewhere. When we have done our month's exercises we shall all be splendid physical specimens





"Where's Auntie?"
"She's upstairs waving her hair, dear."
"Hasn't she got a flag to wave?"

I don't doubt, but what about our minds? Surely we need a month's mental exercises too so that our minds may keep pace with our bodies.

That, at any rate, is my idea. I have made some study of the subject, and append herewith a sample of my own course of mental development. The exercises are quite simple, and no expensive apparatus is needed, apart from a kettle, a dozen oysters, a pot of whale-blubber and possibly a crowbar.

Here they are:—

1.—Rotate the mind rapidly about its axis. When it comes to rest the densest part will be at the bottom. Keep it there and use the top part.

2.—Take a word, a good long one—say "Unilateral." Bend the mind over it. Keep on bending. Gradually the word will begin to mean something. When you have got it, stop bending. If you don't get it, stop using it. Relax.

3.—Open the mind—with a crowbar if necessary. Get a friend, if you have one, to shout out "Bolshie!" "Divorce!" "Hitler!" "Cripps!" "Crisis!" in a loud voice, while still keeping the mind open. Hold it as long as you can. Now relax and breathe gently through the nose. Repeat until the mind will stay open of its own accord.

4.—Take a kettle and fill it with prime oysters. Eat the oysters. Now fill the kettle with whale-blubber and





"I'D 'AVE INVITED ME SISTER IN GLAMORGAN TO THE CORONATION, BUT I 'ADN'T A STAMP."

try eating that. You will find it quite a different kettle of fish. Yet Eskimos eat whale-blubber. Why? Try thinking of an answer.

If you have faithfully performed all the foregoing exercises you deserve some reward. So buy yourself another kettleful of oysters. Buy a pailful if you like. Be careful you don't swallow the shells.

There, that is a fair sample of my system. Simple, isn't it? And in case any reader should doubt its efficacy I submit the following medical opinions on my mental state before and after the complete course:—

Before.

"I have examined Mr. ——'s mind and am not convinced that he has any. He shows no grasp of the quantum theory, and when I asked him what he knew of the theory of relativity he said 'Relativity who?' I measured his head and found that from the front of his occiput to the back of his cephalopod measured only three-and-a-quarter inches. I regard this as a very bad sign. (*Signed*) ——."

After

"I have now examined Mr. ——'s head again, and certify that I am astonished at the rapid growth of his occiput. It now sticks out a couple of inches, almost as if someone had raised a lump on it by some means. He appears to know how many half-guineas make a guinea, and I have ascertained that he can write his own name on a cheque. (*Signed*) ——."



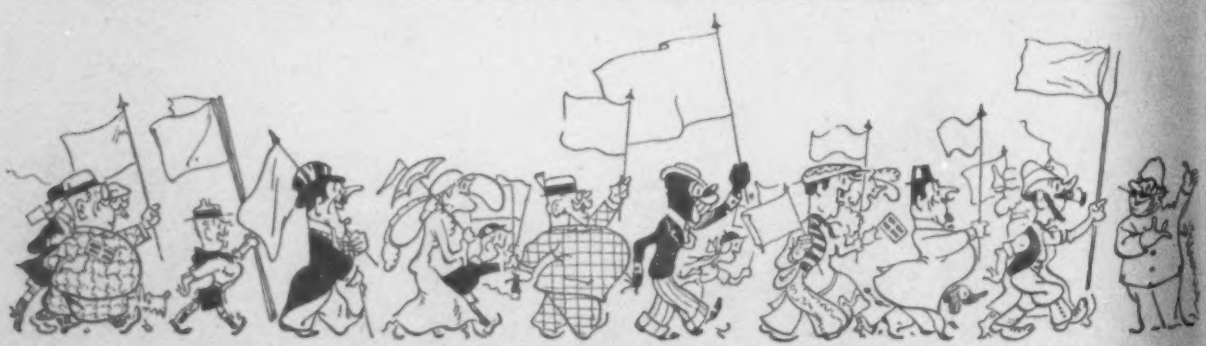


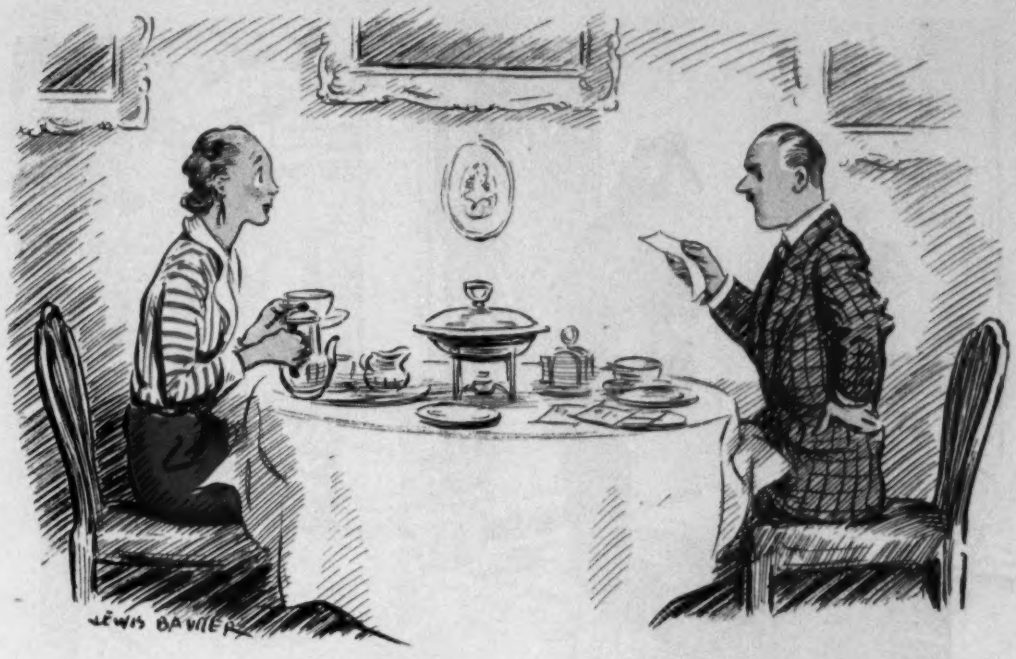
"TUT! TUT! THAT'S A SCURVY LOT OF RECRUITS. WHY, THEY'D BE LAUGHED OFF ANY DECENT BATTLEFIELD!"

The Kiddies' Own Corner

DEAR *BOYS and GIRLS,—Your very own corner at last! Isn't that exciting? And in a great big coloured number too! I do hope you'll all enjoy the splendid stories and pictures on this page. Write and tell me what you think of this new venture, mentioning your favourites and enclosing as many stamps as you like, in case I should feel like writing back to you. And be sure not to miss the Great Coronation Competition. Everyone has an equal chance of winning the magnificent prize, so don't be afraid to enter. Even if you don't get the prize you'll have had the fun, won't you? Now just one word of apology before you start away on all the good things in store for you. We had planned to begin to-day the exciting adventures of Mr. Mulligatawny and his Pet Poodle, Feodora, but, oh dear! oh dear! whatever do you think? Feodora has got rabies and bitten her master, so there won't be any adventures after all. I'm ever so sorry.*

Your loving UNCLE DICK.





"What is it, darling?"
"A dunning letter from the Chancellor of the Exchequer."
"What—in Coronation Week! How unpatriotic!"

The Story of Our Wonderful Empire

If you open your atlases and look at the map of the world—the *political* map, dears, not the Distribution of Vegetation and Trend of Ocean Currents—you will notice that the land is all divided up into different colours. The red parts belong to the British Empire, the bluish-purple to France, the bright green to Italy, the yellow to Belgium, the dull green to Portugal, and so on. Of course these colours vary a little in different atlases, but the British bits are always red, you will find. At least they are in English maps, though one can't be certain what is done in other countries. Foreigners are so queer. Have you ever thought that your little Portuguese brothers and sisters may be taught to think of India and Australia and Canada as *green* and their own funny little possessions as red? It does seem silly, doesn't it? but you must remember that the Portuguese were once quite good sailors. Long, long ago a party of them sailed round Cape Verde or some such place in a frigate and discovered Africa.

I expect by this time you have all got your maps open at the right place and are wondering how it is that so much of the world's surface is coloured red. How did such a tiny country as ours (try working out how many times it will go into Greenland and enter the result in your note-books) manage to acquire over a quarter of the globe? Perhaps also some of the older ones among you will be asking yourselves what is the *use* of this great Empire of ours. Let us take the second question first, for the other demands a rather long and complicated answer, which deserves a column all to itself some other time. What then is the use of our Empire? Well, in the first place, if we had not got it, we should be only a second-class power, and nobody wants to be *that*. Secondly, the Empire supplies us with all sorts





DETACHMENT

of useful *commodities*, such as copra and jute, which we should otherwise have to buy from foreigners. (By the way, children, never, never think there is anything derogatory about that word "foreigners." It simply means people of other countries who have not enjoyed quite the same upbringing and advantages as ourselves.) So you see how important it is that we should all do our little bit to keep the Empire together.

Now draw a sketch-map of the world from memory, putting in Angola in black to show the little Portuguese boys and girls where they get off.

* * *

SOME POSERS FOR THE FAMILY CIRCLE

DID YOU KNOW THAT—

On Coronation Day the Master of the Rolls has a hereditary right to challenge the Bishop of Oxford to a game of snooker?

The State Pepper-Pot weighs 14½ cwt.?

At a banquet after the Coronation of HENRY VI. the then Lord Chancellor ate three oysters without removing the shells!

By a Royal Edict of 1637 Peeresses may not wear their coronets in third-class railway-carriages?

Red, white and blue sunshades are on sale at Sleaford, Lincs?

A hen in Worcestershire has laid an egg bearing a marked resemblance to Mr. LLOYD GEORGE?

Slices of plum-cake are being distributed free to old-age pensioners of Slycombe St. Mary?

* * *

SPECIAL CORONATION JOKE

(*For Boys Only*)

Q. Why is the Imperial Crown like a bad tooth which has been treated with Dr. Jumbo's Molarine?

A. Because it always tops a King (it always stops aching). Ha! Ha! (*Advt.*)





"NEVER MIND THE LONG SEA-VOYAGES; WHAT *WE* WANT TO KNOW IS, SHALL WE HAVE A GOOD VIEW OF THE CORONATION PROCESSION."

OUR TOP-HOLE CORONATION COMPETITION

Open to all children under the age of fourteen on May 1st. (Entries from Scotland or from members of the staff of this paper will not be accepted.)

What Is Wrong With This Picture?



FULL-DRESS UNIFORM OF AN ADMIRAL OF THE FLEET

All you have to do is to look carefully at this photograph and write down as neatly as you can on a postcard any inaccuracies you may notice. Then post it (stamped or unstamped, just as you please) to the Earl Marshal, who is the sole judge in matters of this kind. He may send you a MAGNIFICENT MODEL SUBMARINE which sinks to the bottom without being touched!

* * *

HOW TO MAKE A MODEL CROWN FOR NOTHING

Take a bit of stiff or stiffish paper, cut it out carefully in the shape of a crown and gum the two loose ends together. Now plunge into a bath of gold-paint, and where are you?

* * *

Next Week!!! The Adventures of Mr. Oxtail and his specially-inoculated Mock Turtle, Moses.



Preparations at Bogchester

"MARK my words, Meadows, to-day's proceedings would have been quite unnecessary if my advice had been taken in the first place. It should have been obvious that in a place with such loyal traditions as Bogchester every public body would want to celebrate the Coronation officially. And it should have been equally obvious that a committee was needed to co-ordinate their efforts. The experience of someone like myself, who took a leading part in the last Coronation ceremonies, would have been invaluable in preventing the various arrangements from clashing.

"But it is too late to talk of that now. Each public body has been allowed to go its own way, and I for one am expecting a good deal of confusion at to-day's rehearsal. Every serious-minded citizen will of course recognise that the procession of the Rural District Council, led by Sir George and myself, is the direct link with the Crown, and no doubt on the day itself this fine piece of pageantry will arouse the most interest. The demonstrations by the police and the fire-brigade, and even the march-past by the Junior Imperial League, are of purely secondary importance.

"And even granting Mrs. Gloop's contention that the armed forces of the Crown have a special importance on Coronation Day, I cannot feel that the Girl Guide detachments are truly representative of the military strength of Bogchester. For one thing they are not even mentioned in *The Army List*; and for another, their only real weapon is, after all, a knife containing an implement for extracting stones from horses' hooves. The Empire, Meadows, was not won by equine pedicure.

"But I have no more time to waste now. You at least know your duties, Meadows; you are to stand in the crowd and cheer for the King, the Queen and the Bogchester Rural District Council. Other parties may be greeted with sincere—but subdued—clapping."

An Unworthy Ruse

As I have so accurately prophesied, trouble has already arisen when I arrive outside the Parish Church to rehearse the District Council's procession to the Town Hall, where on the day itself Sir George is to distribute Coronation mugs and Coronation buns to the school-children. Our assembly ground is small, and it appears that the police, without informing us of their intentions, have also decided to parade there for a march through the streets to the Police Station. And a particularly unworthy ruse has already been adopted to allow them to hold their parade before us. Police-Constable John Budge has been detailed off to stop every member of the District Council as he arrives in his car and to carry out a lengthy inspection of his driving licence. "Ah!" he says, when I register an indignant protest, "we got to see that no one breaks the law, not on Coronation Day. What'd the King say if he thought that the Coronation was being made an excuse for crime?"

In the meantime to Sir George and myself falls the difficult task of assembling the District Council in some attempt at a military formation. Most of the members are overcome by a sudden and ridiculous bashfulness, and each one tries to gain a place in one of the rear ranks, so that when we move off, Sir George and myself leading, the impression is inevitably given that we are being pursued at a distance by a hostile but intimidated mob. Consequently I suggest to Sir George that on the day itself the rear shall be brought up by the fire-engine, whose erratic progress will be quite sufficient to prevent straggling. It is just such minor points as these which the rehearsal is intended to bring out.

Resourcefulness of Councillor Marsden

Another unexpected point arises as the procession is passing through Winkle Street, the narrow and tortuous approach to the Town Hall. Owing to confusion over the time of the service, the Girl Guide detachments under Mrs. Gloop enter the street from the north on their way to the Parish Church at the same moment that we enter it from the south on our way to the Town Hall. The two parties meet in the middle, and it becomes clear that there is no room for them to pass.

"You must go back, Madam," says Sir George firmly. "According to our time-schedule we are due at the Town Hall in precisely two minutes."

"The Girl Guides never retreat!" cries Mrs. Gloop. "Stand fast, Millicent! Look to your front, Myrtle, and see that the forefinger and thumb are in line with the seam of the skirt."

It seems that complete deadlock has arrived; but it is unexpectedly broken by the resourcefulness of Councillor William Marsden. Squeezing his way through to the rear ranks of the Guides, he spreads the quite unfounded rumour that various patterns of Coronation bun are about to be distributed for test purposes to all who happen to be in the Town Hall at the time of the rehearsal. Disaffection spreads in the ranks; small groups of Guides silently detach themselves from the rear and in a short time the whole body is moving at the double towards the Town Hall steps. For once the iron discipline of the Girl Guides has broken and we are free to continue our march down Winkle Street.

Patriotic Splendour

Upon our arrival at the Town Hall a magnificent scene of patriotism meets the eye. Flags of every nation in the world, surmounted by the Royal Standard, cover the walls from floor to ceiling. Streamers of red, white and blue flutter in the draught from every door. The windows which





"PLEASE HAVE YOU SEEN TWO LADIES WALKING ABOUT WITHOUT ME?"

were broken during the last General Election have been stuffed with gaily-coloured bunting. In one corner of the room the Bogchester Brass Band is in full blast practising patriotic airs. In another the Vicar is describing to the schoolchildren of Bogchester the spirit of British sportsmanship whose traditions, it is to be hoped, will be maintained during the Coronation sports. Sir George seizes the opportunity of widening the outlook of the Rural District Council by delivering a speech on the British Empire in general and his own visit to Malta ten years ago in particular. In the background Mrs. Gloop can be heard rallying the Guides with a description of how the British soldier always faces the enemy, even though he is surrounded and attacked from every direction at once, and every now and then the treble voices of the Guides can be heard demanding when the practice distribution of Coronation buns is to start.

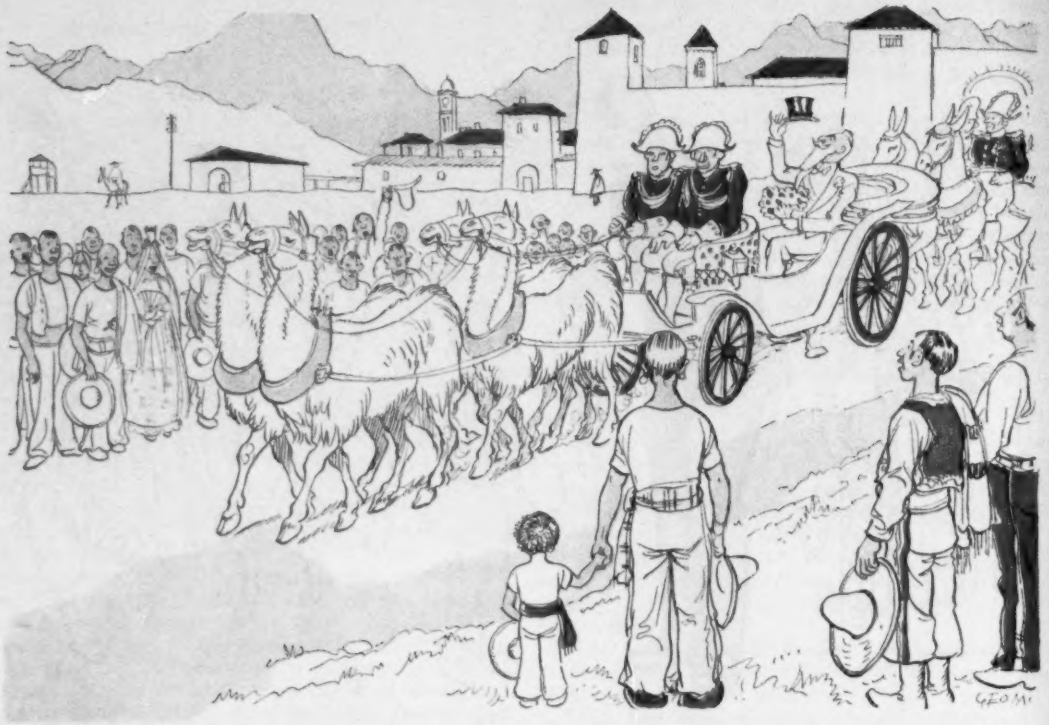
The main part of the rehearsal, however, is still to come. On the day itself all parties will converge on the Market Place, where Sir George will lead the spectators in giving three cheers for the King and Queen. There is then to be a ceremonial lighting of the Market Place bonfire, in whose embers, when the sports are over, the ox is to be roasted whole. The day is then to end with dancing on the cobblestones to the music of the Bogchester Brass Band.

It is an ambitious programme, but, alas! as we move off from the Town Hall to the Market Place, intending to show the spectators exactly what is expected of them on Coronation Day, we are faced by an unforeseen problem. It appears that there are no spectators left in Bogchester.

An Overflow of Loyalty

Large bodies of citizens can be seen marching and countermarching in all directions. In the distance the banners of the Tradesmen's Association are tossing stormily as the Junior Imperial League tries vainly to force a passage through their flank. A small flock of sheep accidentally trapped in the ranks of the Young Farmers' Club is being





"I DON'T KNOW IF YOU HAVE NOTICED IT, PEDRO, BUT EVER SINCE THE PRESIDENT WENT TO THE LORD MAYOR'S SHOW IN LONDON TWO YEARS AGO HE SEEMS TO HAVE A PASSION FOR FOLLOWING THE ENGLISH FASHIONS."

marched briskly past the Clock Tower, bleating piteously. Every street is choked by some organisation on the march; and yet the space in front of the bonfire, which has been roped off for the spectators, is entirely deserted.

Furthermore, it now appears that the Bogchester Sports Club has chosen this moment to rehearse the firework display which it intends to give in the Market Place, and even as we approach a badly-handled rocket comes hissing through our ranks to burst among the Freemasons who are drawn up behind.

But the crowning folly occurs when we reach the bonfire. I have no aspersion to make on the general intentions of the Fire Brigade, and no doubt their idea of using their hoses to form a triumphal arch of water-jets is in every way an excellent one, and it might even be necessary for some of the bystanders to get wet during the process; but I can find no excuse for the gross carelessness which allows the combined cascade from six powerful hoses to fall on the precise spot where the Rural District Council has assembled. Not only are we instantly drenched from head to foot, but the whole dignity of the most important part of the Bogchester celebrations is seriously endangered. The great shout of vulgar laughter that arises cannot be considered to be in the best traditions of the British Empire.

Nevertheless good comes out of evil. The absurd story is circulated that this incident is a piece of pageantry intended to symbolise Britain's command of the sea, and that it is to be repeated with increased water-pressure on Coronation Day. As a result it now seems certain that the spectators' enclosure will be filled to overflowing; most of the superfluous organisations are now not only willing but eager to take a passive part in the celebrations, and the Bogchester Rural District Council is assured of being the focus of all interest when the day arrives.

It is only by a careful and conscientious rehearsal that such problems as these can be effectively solved.





FIRST, THE SPORTS CAP



SECONDLY, THE SPORTS COAT



THIRDLY, THE SPORTS MUFFLER



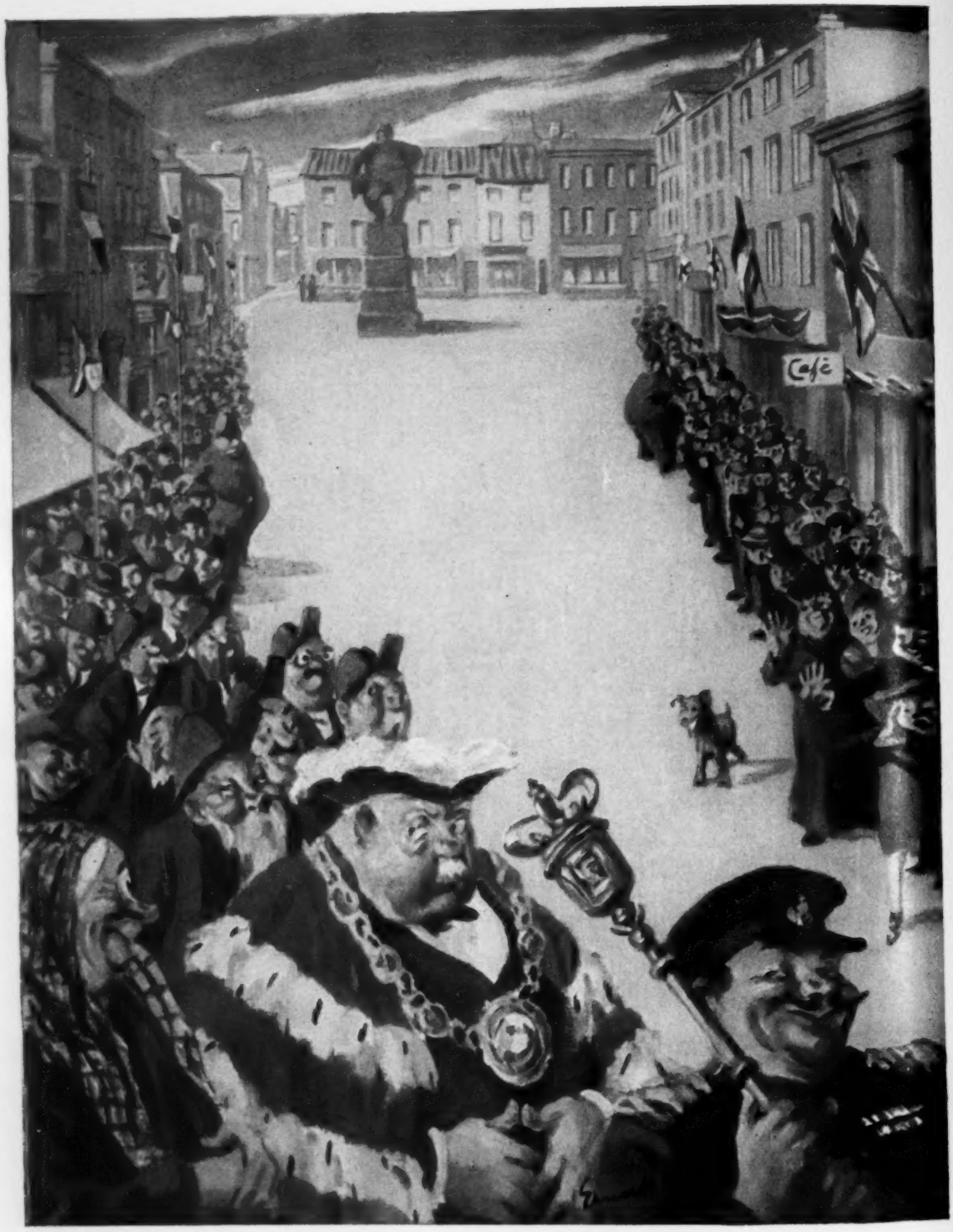
THEN THE SPORTS MOTOR



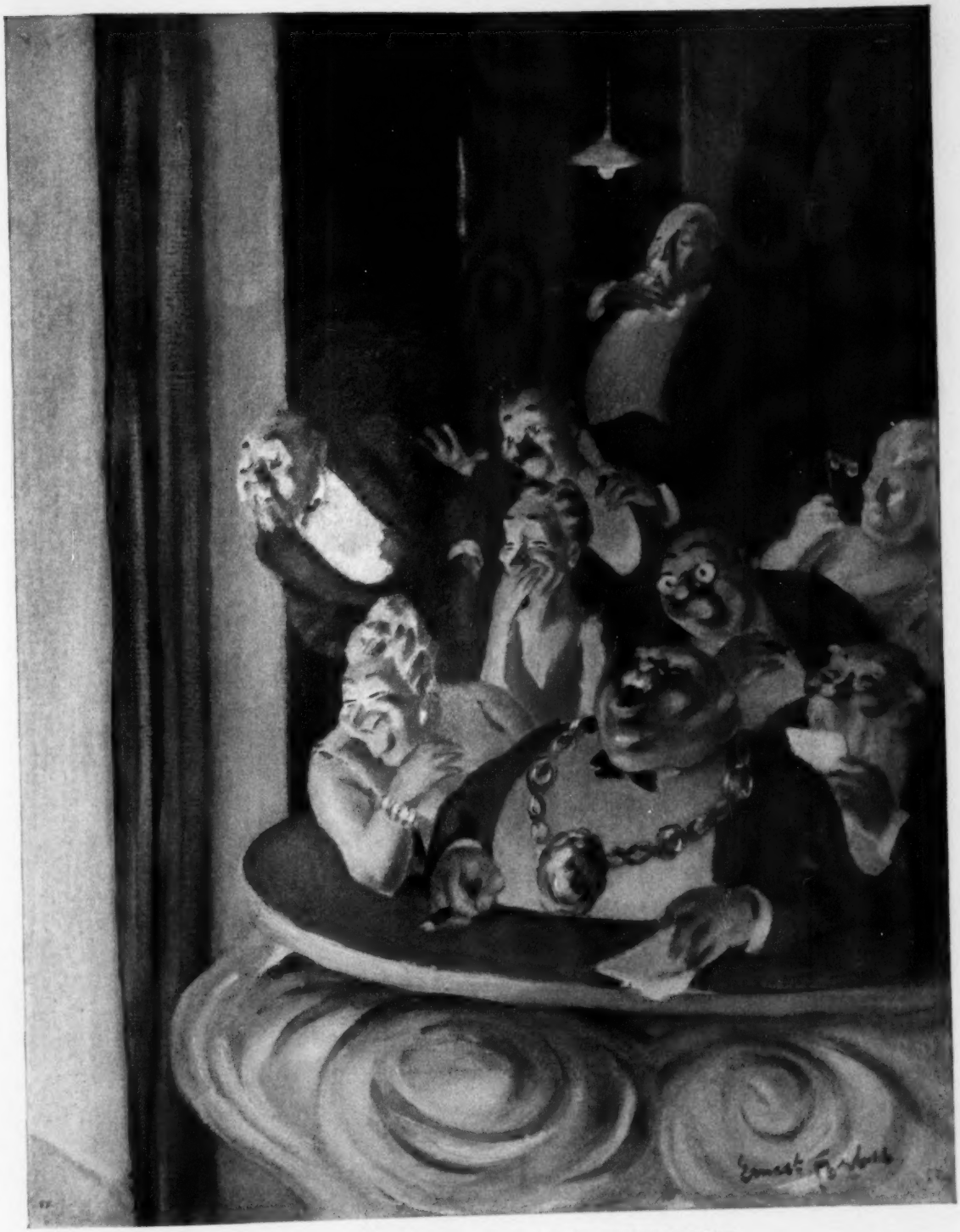
AFTER THAT THE SPORTS WALKING-STICK



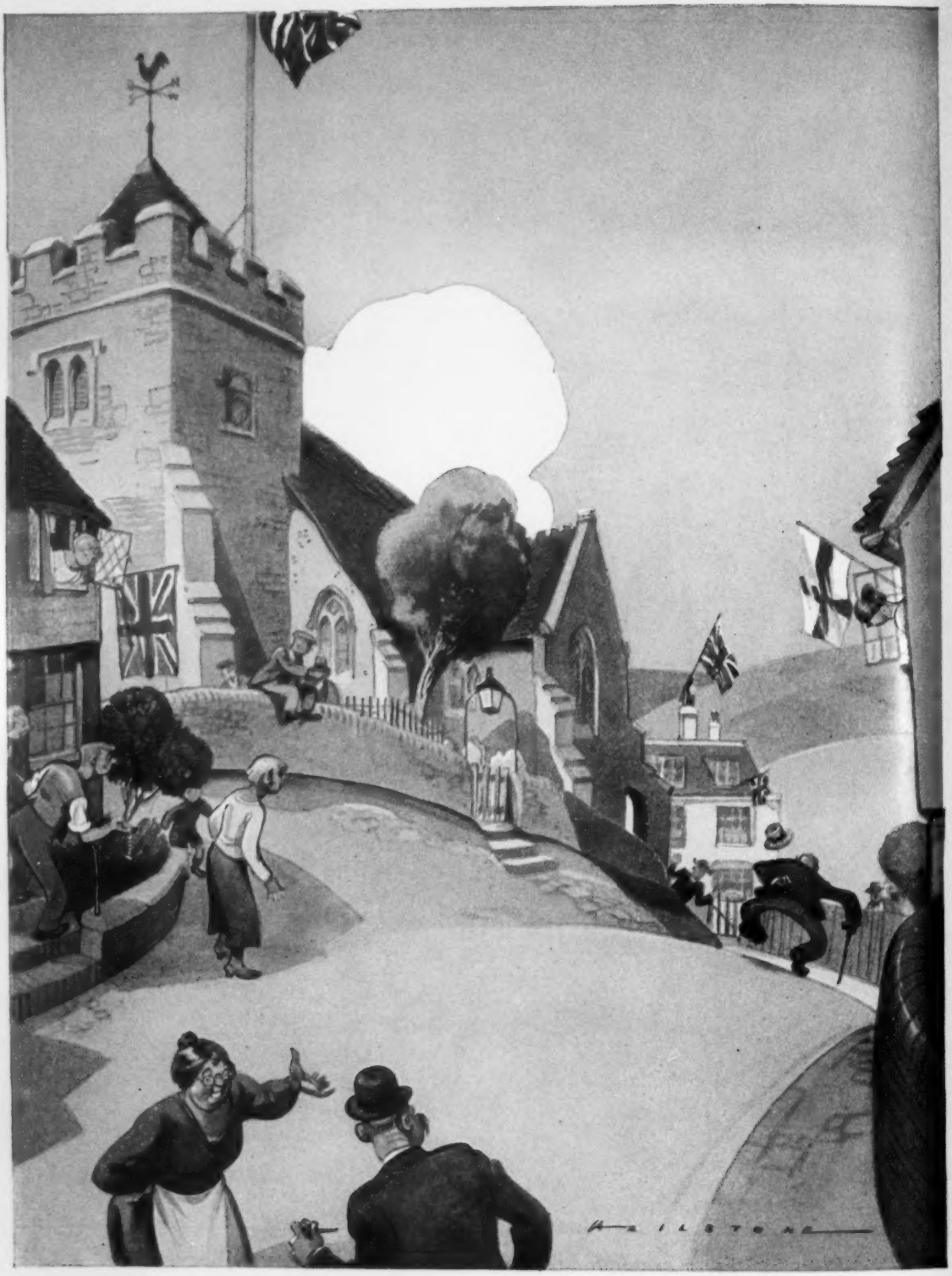
AND LAST OF ALL—THE SPORT



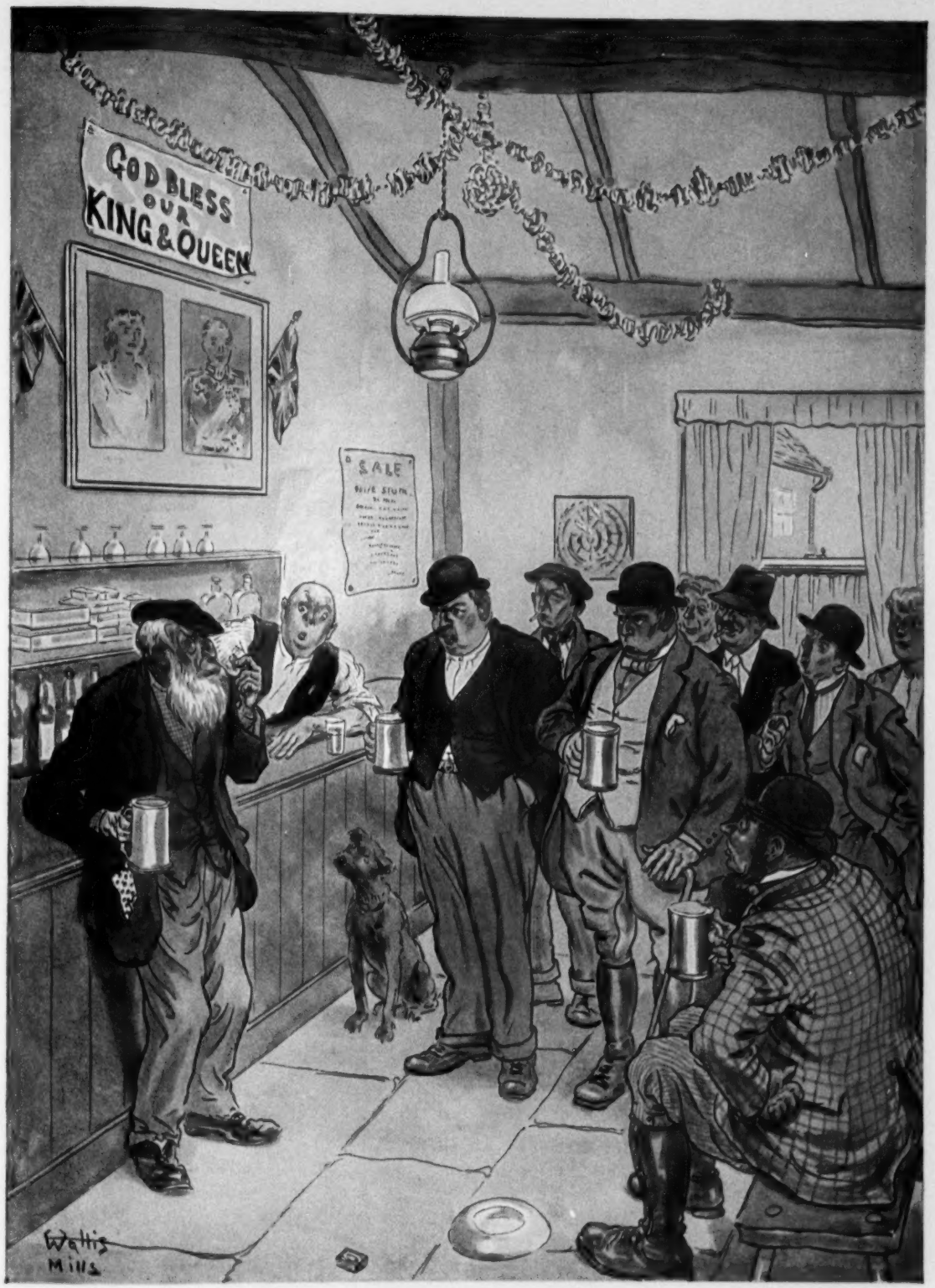
IN THE PROVINCES. I.—PROCESSIONAL



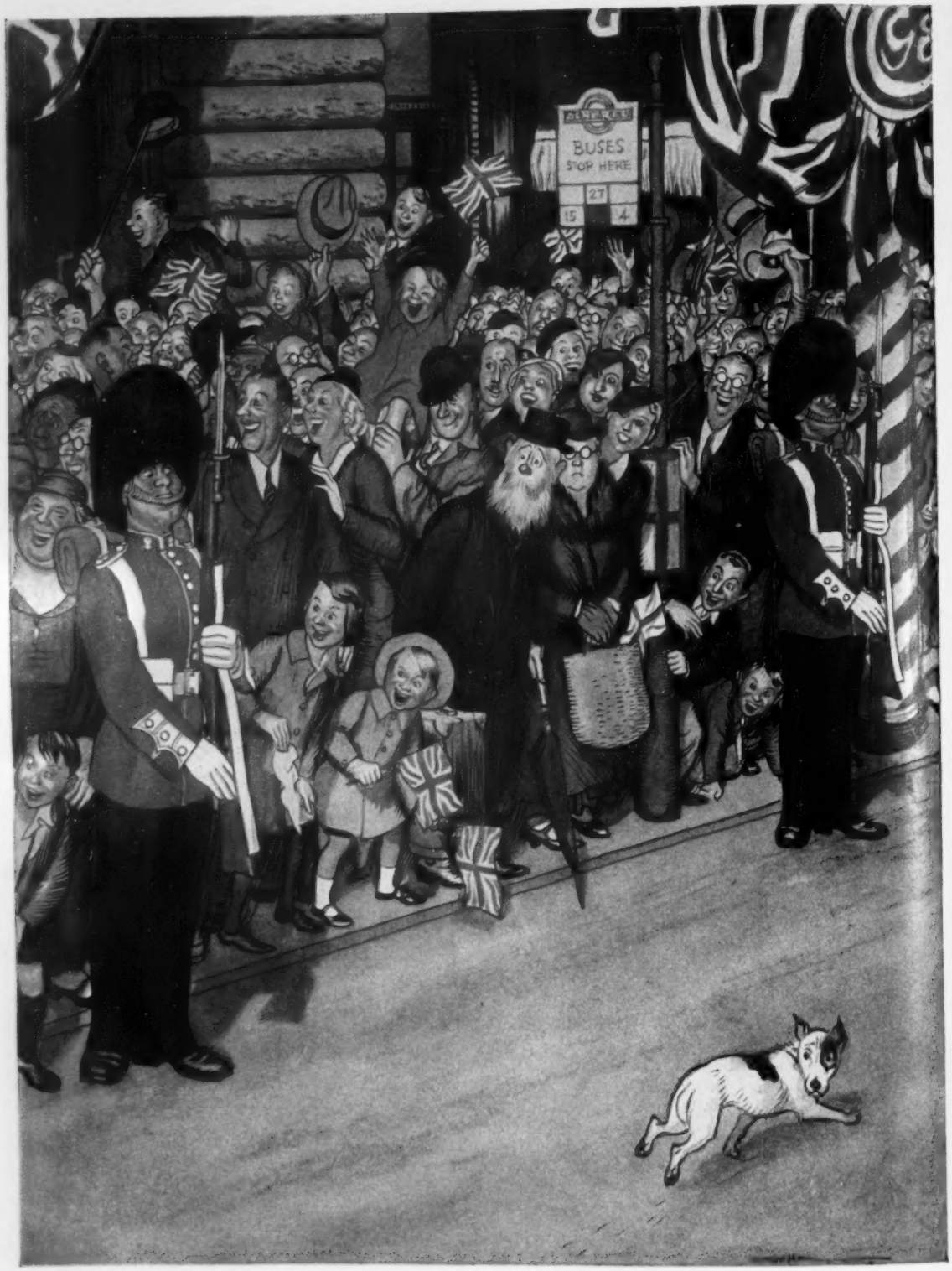
IN THE PROVINCES. II.—COMMAND PERFORMANCE



"WHY, THAT BE GRANFER, MUS' JENNER, A-TRAININ' FOR 'IS CORONATION TEA."



"THERE 'LL BE GAY DOIN'S AT THIS 'UN, I DESSAY, BUT YER JEST SHOULD 'VE SEEN WILLUM THE FOWERTH'S."



"NO, JANET, IT ISN'T OUR BUS *YET*. IT'S ONLY SOME SORT OF PROCESSION."



"DON'T YOU REALISE THAT I'VE *GOT* TO BE AT 76, THE GROVE, BY EIGHT O'CLOCK?"



"NO, WE DON'T EMPLOY A CONDUCTOR NOW; WE FIND IT MAKES NO DIFFERENCE."

Charivaria

In America a conjurer performed at a Zoo in order to see how the inmates responded to his tricks. Only the ostriches appeared to be impressed—but then ostriches, as we know, will swallow anything.

* * *

"Don't Let Hoodoo Get You."
John Bull headline.

Hoodoo?

* * *

A writer in *The Church Times* wants to see the ancient post of Court Jester revived this year. Would Mr. George Robey be considered too eyebrow?

* * *

Nowadays, we are told, the food which is provided on the stage is eatable. In the further interests of realism we suggest that the dialogue provided on the stage should be audible.

* * *

"Scientists reckon that if the fall in the birth-rate continues the population of England and Wales in ninety-eight years' time will be less than to-day's 40,500,000."—*Sunday Pictorial.*

There 's one thing about scientists—they won't be stampeded.

* * *

In parts of Central Africa it is the custom for natives to loosen their teeth with special stones found in river beds. In this country revolving doors are used instead.



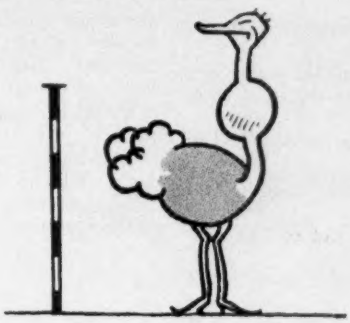
Londoners like to look back on the city they used to know in bygone days. There are still some who can remember it when there wasn't a single stand all the way from Whitehall to Hyde Park Corner.

* * *

A correspondent in a daily says that a goldfish is a very companionable and amusing pet. Try it in your bath.

* * *

A unique cult is reported from London. It appears that it has not yet despatched a committee of inquiry to Spain.



Only five hours after putting his three clocks forward an hour at the commencement of summer-time, a West-End actor discovered that they had been removed by burglars. He will now, we fear, have to wait until October 3 for them to be put back.

* * *

A ladder made of woven silk thread is a new form of fire-escape. It is also, for that matter, a very common form of hose.

* * *

"What is the younger generation driving at?" demands a clergyman. Seventy on the speedometer. Twenty-eight in the witness-box.

* * *

Attention is directed to the number of business men who patronise swimming-baths during the lunch-hour. The idea is to practise keeping their heads above water.





Quadruplets, all boys, have been born in Moscow. It is doubtful, however, if they will be called The Four Karl Marx Brothers.

* * *

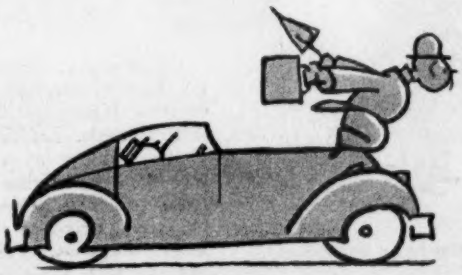
She Stoops to Conquer

"Lady Astor (20),one of the players who received a bye into the second round, gained an easy win over A. West Russell (14), M.P. for Tynemouth, by 7 and 6d."—*Sunday Paper.*

* * *

"Very few men make advances without encouragement, however small," says a correspondent in *The Daily Express*. Take our bank manager, for instance . . .

* * *



An elderly defendant at Guildhall admitted that he had spent the best part of his life in gaol. He didn't mention where he'd spent the worst part.

* * *

A pedestrian recently avoided being run down by leaping straight on to the bonnet of a car. Larger-sized windscreen wipers will just *have* to be fitted.

King's Ruby

BACK in the mystical past, long, long before your little island
Cringed to the whiplash of Rome or dreamed of the masterful Norman,
See me afire on the taj of a proud Mahommedan princeling,
Pride of a Burmese shrine, a bribe for the kiss of a temptress.
PEDRO THE CRUEL of Spain bestowed me on EDWARD of England,
Spoil for a conquering prince, true symbol of kingship and power.
Mark me on Agincourt's field, in the helmet of him who was HOTSPUR.
Ever since then have I gleamed in front of the emblem of Empire;
Tyrants, dictators must fall, and kings go the way of all mortals,
Dynasties crash to their doom, their glory and grandeur departed.
Yet may I splendidly stay as the symbol of kingship with freedom,
Heart of the high-flashing Cross, the token of lordship benignant,
Sign of a people at one, untroubled by schisms and factions,
Knowing that peace must persist so long as our faith be unshattered.

The Gold Standard

Do you really understand this absorbing subject? I mean *really* understand it, not just look intelligent when reading about the long-term effects of any devaluation of the franc. Now be honest about it!

If you do, you're just the man I've been looking for; but if you feel a little hazy on the matter, if your facts are not quite sufficiently marshalled, so to speak, I'll try in a few words to put the matter in its true light.

Firstly, you must remember this: that any attempt to stabilise the franc in terms of lire will immediately lower the price of gold *vis-à-vis* the purchasing power of sterling. It clearly follows from this that a cheap money policy within the gold bloc is only possible so long as the silver content of the dollar is based on the internal price-level of *other* commodities. You see the point? I must admit I always feel that so long as the yen is linked to sterling one of the chief dangers of uncontrolled deflation lies in the resulting disequilibrium of purchasing power parities, because, clearly, the free movement of gold will be sterilised once the index number of wholesale commodities passes the gold export point; but then an "economic blizzard" is bound to result in blocked currencies and frozen credits, isn't it?

Do I make myself clear? Of course the points involved *are* a little tricky, but you must admit I have mastered the jargon pretty well, and I really feel most confident about things generally. Why, then, all this economic gloom?



"AND TO THINK THAT YOU ONCE WROTE ON MY SCHOOL REPORT 'WASTES HIS TIME DRAWING.'"

"The Giftie"

ONLY a glimpse, and a very Fat Lady
Away on my right,
Who stood by the handkies,
Moved, and in moving blocked her from sight.

Where had I seen her before?
One of those people next-door?
Somewhere or other I ought to be able to place
That anxious-inquiring,
Obviously-up-from-the-country,
Service-desiring,
Rather-bewildered-by-London-glimpse of a face.
Sometime or other
Those oddly familiar eyes
Met mine before with the same constrained surprise,
Diffident, worried, humble.
Some Mothers' Meeting perhaps? A Charity Jumble?
Or passed in a hurry
Rambling, or motoring somewhere in Surrey?
Or shopping in Farnham. Yes. Now I've got it.
Shopping last Friday!
No, No. That's not it!
Who can she be?
Dumpy, familiar, hair not quite tidy,
Nose lacking powder,
Hat shapeless and shady,
Seen for an instant behind the Fat Lady.
I fancy she saw me.
When the Fat Lady moves I shall see.

And then the Fat Lady moved and disclosed,
Standing before me,
Familiar as I had supposed,
A mirror. And me.

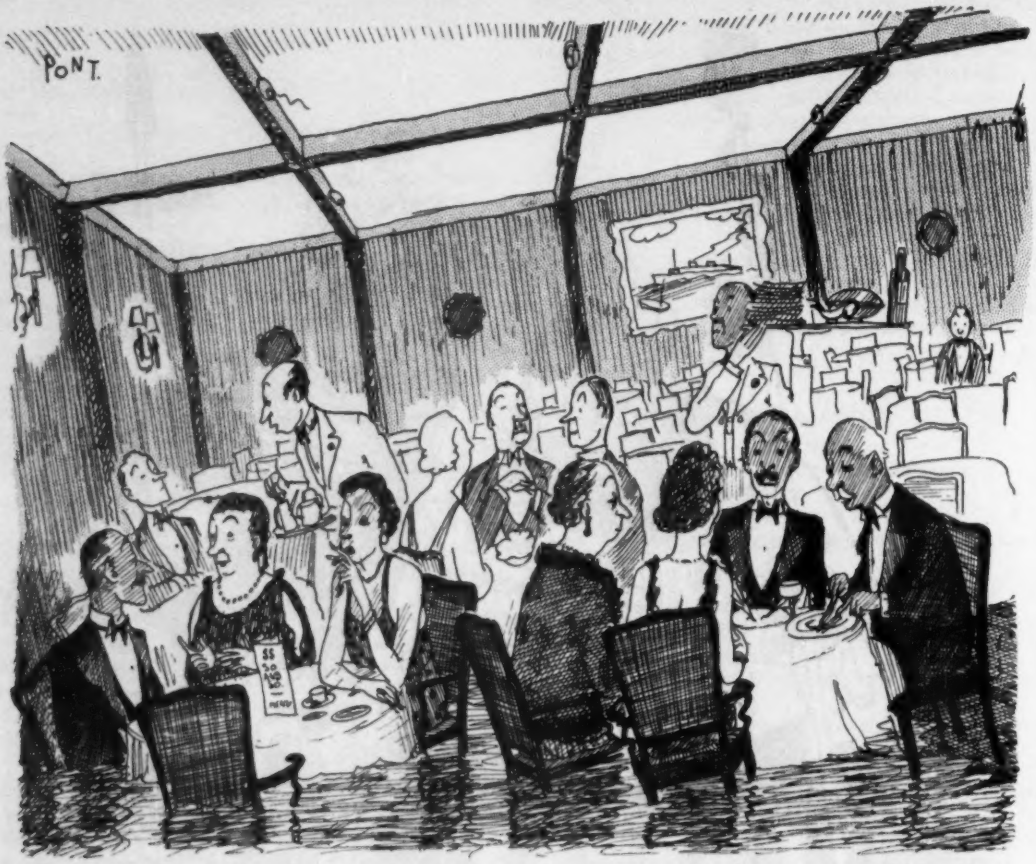
Dog Wanted

VEGETARIAN. Eyes not too soulful. Good with bark, *i.e.*, loud to burglars, under breath to inquirers after dog-licences. If high-spirited able distinguish fur-coated humans, ditto animals. Indifferent to cats, rugs, upholstered chairs. Trained to use (*a*) pedestrian crossings, (*b*) door-mats on wet days, (*c*) to give warning of fire, (*d*) to save children from drowning. Guaranteed to survive buyer and mourn on grave. Ex-film stars unsuitable. To fit medium-size kennel and coat. Price: half-a-crown down, remainder by arrangement.



GOG AND DEMAGOG

"ISN'T THIS AWFUL?"
"LET'S FORGET ALL ABOUT IT UNTIL AFTER WHITSUN."



THE BRITISH CHARACTER

LOVE OF KEEPING CALM.

L.P.T.B.

As there seems to be no way of keeping people out of London just now, short of holding the Coronation in Manchester, beginners will need some instruction in ways of getting about. We are so tired of seeing them standing on the wrong side of escalators, offering their seats to ladies in the Tube, and so on, that we felt we simply had to do something about it.

The letters L.P.T.B. stand for the most progressive body in London. Indeed, what with one thing and another, what with Red Lights and Left Luggage, progressive may be rather an understatement. But the authorities are very kind to beginners. There are lots of coloured lights, and you will find helpful notices telling you how many pennies to put in for a twopenny ticket; but even so, Undergroundlings, you are all bound to make mistakes at first. Sometimes little ones, such as giving up your ticket to a Gas Company inspector or a chauffeur, and sometimes big ones, like the one we describe in the next section.

Tendency to arrive at Chalk Farm. One day, when you are making an easy journey for beginners, say, from Leicester Square to Picc. Circ., the train will stop very alarmingly at an unheard-of station. Get out at once; you 've blundered. It's no good pretending you're going to meet somebody there, because the other passengers won't believe it. They've done it in their time too. So just cross over quietly to the other platform and go back on a nice friendly train.

Full Circle. We mentioned Picc. Circ. station just then, didn't we? This is the round place where you wait forty minutes for somebody. It is also useful for shopping, seeing the time in Valparaiso, changing that half-crown, and crossing the Circus when you get tired of waiting for the traffic to stop. But be careful: beginners entering at Regent Street South are liable after several minutes' walking to come up at Regent Street South. Other features are policewomen and trains.

Problem. You are standing in a train reading in somebody else's evening paper about the ʜɐɯdɐɯ ʇɹɐǝɥ sɪɟɟoɔ when a woman gets in suddenly. She wears the wild expression (you know it well) of one who has been unintentionally to Chalk Farm and is jolly well not going there again, even if she has to make a scene. She picks you out of the crowd and says breathlessly: *"Does this train go to Baron's Court?"* Deal with this woman.

Answer. Choose the solutions from these:—

1. "Yes." (Actually untrue; and

risky, unless you're getting out very soon.)

2. "No." (Rather heartless, and only a guess anyway.)

3. "I don't know." (Weak; you won't be able to look your neighbours in the SUNLIGHT for the rest of the journey.)

4. Say nothing or grunt. The man opposite will then reply: "No. Take the next train and change at Earl's Court." Repeat this to the woman, and there you are.

Oy! The ticket-collector, though on the whole a stolid sort of fellow, is liable to look like GROUCHO MARX and sometimes will start bellowing just after you've passed him. This means that either you haven't given him anything or you've given him any one of these: Bus ticket, visiting-card, half a cinema ticket, cigarette-card. Hurry back and smooth him down.

You will make many more mistakes, but we are just not going on with them. Still, before we leave the Underground, there is one point you might like cleared up.

Influence of Museums. There is one station which District and Vicious Circle trains hold in the deepest respect. This is South Ken. Not only do they almost never pass it but they often stay there for ten minutes purring humbly. Roger will tell you this is something to do with filling the brakes with compressed air, but it's not. They're purring.

Busses and Buses. Emerging into the street, you will want to know about Buses (if any). These arrive in groups of eight every sixteen minutes, driven by remote men whom we know nothing about. Conductors are usually funny. Inspectors are not; they are quiet disturbing men who board the bus when you have just finished worrying your ticket into a pulp.

Williams on Windows. Williams, a friend of ours, was riding with us on top of a bus. We complained of the stuffiness. Williams got up, took off his coat and OPENED THE WINDOW. At once the other passengers crowded round us, congratulating Williams as he lay exhausted on the back-seat. They helped us bind up his hands. Note to beginners: Don't try this. Williams is an experienced Londoner.

Now that we've given you a good start in London, how much do you know? Select the right answer from the ones given:—

1. *What do you do with your suitcase on a bus?*

Offer it to the conductor—Cram it under the next man's knees—Get it stuck halfway up the staircase—Tear it in half and leave it on the bus.

2. *What do you do when asked for your ticket in a first-class compartment on the District?*

Start undressing—Pay the extra one-and-nine—Casually hum the Refrain from *Spitting*.

3. *What characterises the polished Londoner?*

Riots on the slightest provocation—Never raises his eyes above shop-level—Wears a brightly-coloured bowler—Lunches in the Tube.

4. *When you're waiting in Piccadilly for a 22 bus, what order will the buses come in?*

You needn't answer this one. The order is, always: 9, 25A, 38, 9, 19, 77, 25A, 44, 9, 38, 44, 19, 77, 9, 38, 38, 38, 44, 9, 22.

A Sporting Artist

ADMIRERS of the work of the late GILBERT HOLIDAY, who contributed many drawings to Mr. Punch's pages, are reminded that a Memorial Exhibition of the paintings and drawings which he left behind him is now on view at The Sporting Gallery, 70, Jermyn Street, S.W.1.



"WELL, NO, I CAN'T SAY WE ARE FINANCIALLY EMBARRASSED. FACT IS, WE'VE LET OUR HOUSE FOR THE CORONATION."

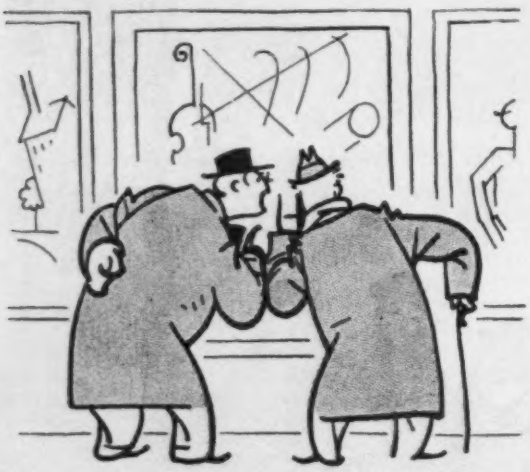
May Fever

(In a recent tennis tournament there competed Mr. Lo, Mr. Ho and Miss HOAHING.)

THE green's on the thicket, the bloom on the thorn,
The net's on the posts and the lines on the lawn,
And gladly to join in their battles they go,
Miss GEM HOAHING, Mr. LO, Mr. HO.
And I shall do likewise, so blithely I sing
Too-looral, Too-looral, LO, HO, HOAHING!

The lawn-mower's grown a new notch in its blade;
It seems twenty years since the last time I played.
I'm shaky, unsteady and wildly cross-eyed,
The moth's in my flannels, and sweater beside.
My last season's racket is short of a string;
But what does that matter? LO, HO, HOAHING!

Who cares for mere details? The sun is so bright
And all of the village are girded in white
(Excepting the Vicar, whose trousers are grey),
And I shall play tennis—yes, tennis to-day!
Hurray! Io! Shahbash! Yoy-yoy! Ting-a-ling!
Oh, summer's i-cumen! LO, HO, HOAHING!



"DO YOU LIKE THIS PICTURE?"

"WELL, I THINK THE ORGANIC SENSIBILITY INHERENT IN THE SUBJECT IS CERTAINLY VERY BEAUTIFULLY BROUGHT OUT BY THE RHYTHMIC BALANCE OF ITS PLANES."

"WHAT'S THAT?"

"I SAID I THOUGHT THE MAIN IDEA WAS VERY WELL DEVELOPED IN THE TREATMENT."

"WHAT'S THAT?"

"I SAID I THOUGHT IT WAS VERY WELL PAINTED."

"WHAT'S THAT?"

"NO!!"

The Britisch Empire

Typical englisch conversations for nordic students of britisch ways and means

VIII.—EMPIRE SPORT

Lord Smith. Hon. Biggs, I am anxious to hear what games you play up at in S. Afrika by way of remaining fit as some fiddles.

Hon. Biggs. Well, of course we have teams at foutbal, cricket, etc., in the normal way, but I tell you, it is my supposal that you, milords, would be interested in the surf-swimming—natation a-top of the strong waves, with boards.

Lord Smith. I am partial to nautical play.

Lord Robinson. I have seen it in the kinema, in motive pictures.

Viscount Brown. Not for me, myself, I tell you, for I am not he who would wisch to risque a dousing at my age too! At horse-polo none shall by-pass me, but at ocean fantastiks let others perform!

Hon. Biggs. Very well, then, we shall broach the ocean, while you remain ashore, with the intention of crying "Ahoy! Beware! Look out! Return! Gracious, here comes a scharque!" should that be necessary.

Lord Smith. A scharque? I have no wisch to swim near the lurkals of pugnacious fisch.

Lord Robinson. Indeed! If scharques are wont to join in the parti, kindly accept my resignation on the spot. One has not come onto the Empire to be gobbled. That would never do.

Hon. Biggs. Ho Ho! Ho Ho! Dismiss your apprehensions! I shall take you on to a beach where no scharques roam.

At the Beach

Lord Robinson. What if my good wife, Bertha, Lady Robinson, the dear woman, were here! She would tremble lest I be stifled by the rollers.

Lord Smith. Indeed, the sea is very go-ahead this morning.

Hon. Biggs. Jump in! What fun! Venture out! Hora! Follow me! This way, please! Splendid! Splasch she goes! What could be more agreeable!

Lord Robinson. I have swallowed a portion of the big wave. Let us hope I can digest it. Ho Ho!

Hon. Biggs. Now kling to your boards and permit the rollers to sweep you land-ho!

[*This they do, but* Lord Smith *has bosched it.*

Lord Smith. O! Ei! Goodbye! Some mistake! I am no longer in kontrol! Reskue!

Hon. Biggs. Ho Ho! Isn't that a good one! Lord Smith is trying to do it under the water! Ahaha!

Lord Robinson. Come, this is no moment for leg-pul! He may be uncomfortable!

[Hon. Biggs *gives* Lord Smith *the helping hand.*

Lord Smith. This sport has not come up to expectations. I have decided to discontinue.

Lord Robinson. To my mind it is all a question of being careful to remain a-float. I shall be sporti and remain in the sea until the exercise suffices. Come! Again!

Hon. Biggs. Bravo! It is just a matter of co-operation with the waves. Ond

Lord Smith. Kolonial ways are not wholly agreeable after all!

The Niceties of Ambiguity

"It remains nevertheless certain that most of the readers of this book will desire nothing less than that Dr. Inge should lay down his pen."—*Times Lit. Supp.*

Golden Rules

As we are just before the six days that will include not only the Coronation festivities but also Whit Sunday and Bank Holiday, and as the woods and lanes are full of flowers, this seems to be a good time for us to pull ourselves together and make sure that we shall not disgrace Britons at play. Coronation festivities and Whit Sunday and a Bank Holiday all close together—such a unique opportunity must not be treated inconsiderately. We must behave.

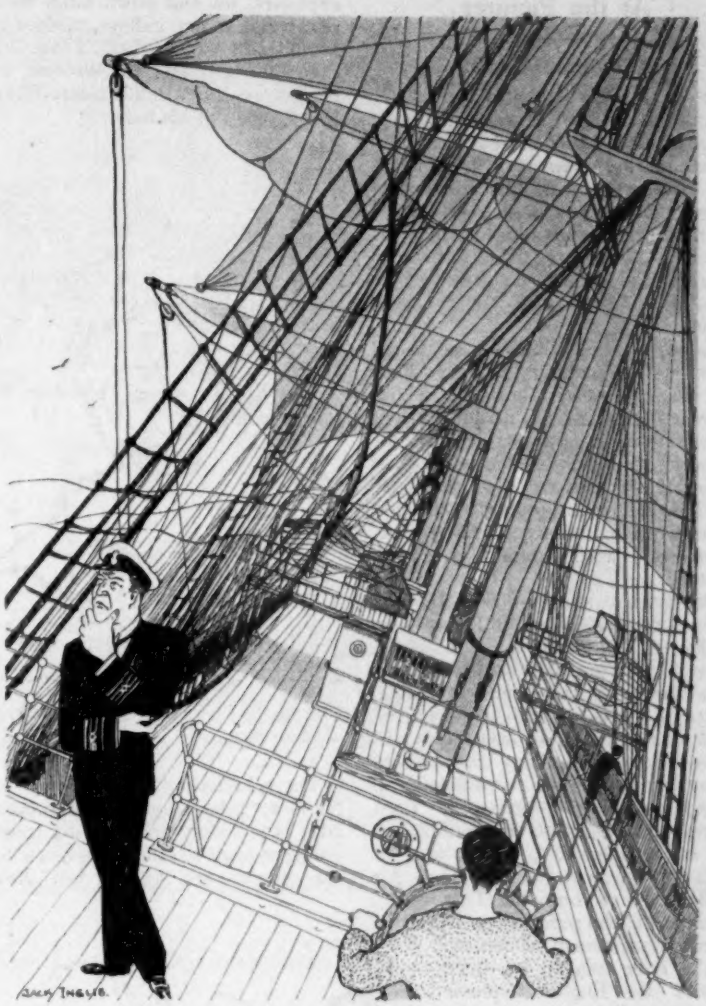
First of all we must complete our plans for the proper treatment of Mother Nature, that over-rated tyrant. She has been said to loathe a vacuum, and she may do so: I am not sufficiently a man of science to know; but there is no doubt that she loathes monotony, and, since nothing can be more monotonous than the green of grass, how delighted Nature must be when we diversify that hue with paper. And that is of course what, next week, we must all do. Wherever we go for our picnics, we must be scrupulously careful to scatter paper about and leave it everywhere, brown, white, yellow, blue; but principally white.

We must be watchful to leave other things too, such as orange-peel and chicken-bones and crusts of bread and burnt places and charred sticks where we have made open-air fires. By adding variety, all this detritus will help to break up the monotony of the green grass. But paper will be best, partly because it is white, and partly because it blows about and is distributed, sometimes even sticking in the branches of the trees or on the thorns of bushes. Besides, it is so cheap and plentiful, every penny newspaper containing many sheets. Let us therefore take plenty of newspapers with us, first to read and then to sit on, and lastly to abandon for the wind to bear where it listeth.

Coming to the question of flowers, let us take the bluebell. And when I say take, I do not mean as an example, but literally. Let us take the bluebell, and the best way of taking it is to pull it up so that the long white stalk is wrenched out of the bulb. It happens to be the fact that, of all flowers, the bluebell is the one that is least satisfactory away from its own abode, where the blue and the green marvellously harmonise, and it has the distinction also of perishing almost soonest. But these trifles must not matter to those of us who are out for fun. The important thing for us is to pluck as many bluebells as possible, without any leaves, tie a string tightly round them, and some hours later transfer them to a vase or basin or jug in which they will quickly die.

Many of us will of course rush about the country in motor-cars and charabancs, but a very large number must hike, because Old England would not be Old England any more if bands of half-naked young men and young women did not cover its face. Hiking seems to differ from walking only in two respects: one being that walkers often used sometimes to walk alone, and the other that walkers were clad. Knees are not beautiful, but we who hike must display them, and we like our companions to display them too; we prefer to carry in our knapsacks too little, and if we return with any skin on our noses we consider the expedition a failure. In the true hiking spirit let us then sally forth and discover those secrets of hill and dale which are divulged only to the blistered fit to receive them, and let us neglect no opportunity of not clearing anything up after us.

What else can I urge for the right celebration of these coming free days? Should we visit any memorial, we must of course write our names on it, and if a tower or castle or belfry offers any woodwork, we must carve our initials. If in our rambles we come upon a secluded empty house we must break the windows. But I am most concerned with strewing litter. Do not let us neglect that part of our duty. E. V. L.



"Now, *where* did I see a rope?"

At the Pictures

A Tibetan Utopia

If, as I believe, one of the proper functions of the film is to open fairy windows, then *Lost Horizon* deserves marks. Visitors to the Tivoli are for a while rapt into a different sphere, where peace and prosperity reign and life stands almost still. The effect is a soothing one until into paradise the serpent creeps. For its romantic fantasy and supernal endeavours *Lost Horizon* can be commended, but when fact enters, it becomes a very ordinary affair, as film-like as any other film, with a full share of carelessness in production, including very capricious regard for climatic conditions. We also have constant suggestions that for once comic relief, or as producers, taking a great word in vain, prefer to call it, "comedy," would have been better omitted.

Briefly, the story of *Lost Horizon* is that of an idealistic and inaccessible settlement in the heights of Tibet, where for two centuries the inhabitants have dwelt in sweet reasonableness under the rule of its founder, the *High Lama*, a Belgian priest who still defies decay or at any rate death. How he came to be surrounded, up there, by such treasures as Lord Rothschild has just been selling, we can only conjecture; but nothing of civilisation except its wickedness (or shall I say its humanity?) is lacking. At the promptings of *Sondra Bizet*, a beautiful denizen of this Eden, played by Jane Wyatt, the English explorer and author, *Robert Conway*, who is none other than Ronald Colman, is diverted to Tibet by a Chinese air-pilot in her pay, together with a party including two funny men; and then of course the expected occurs. That is to say, *Conway* falls in love with *Sondra* and accepts with warmth the prospect of succeeding the Belgian priest; the funny men crack jokes; and *George Conway*, *Robert's* brother (who, unlike the others, has never changed his lounge-suit for Tibetan attire), plots to escape and, very weakly, his brother, and *Maria*, a local lady who has fallen for *George*, accompany him.

Now comes in the triumph of the film, as for hours we watch the party, nominally guided by treacherous Tibetan porters, floundering, in the manner of screen explorers, up and down amid snowy peaks and snowy valleys, ravines and avalanches. It is then, I am sure, that Frank Capra, the director, who has been called "Public Heart-Winner No. 1," feels at his best.



CHAMPION AVALANCHE SURVIVOR
Robert Conway . . . Ronald Colman

The culmination is that *George* and his adorer, who, having left the magical city, is suddenly transformed from a young woman to something like a very old squaw, are killed; but *Robert Conway*, after many perils, including the growth of a considerable beard, makes his way back and presumably becomes High Lama, marries *Sondra* and lives more or less for ever.

My own view, that such a theme could well dispense with comedians, did not, I must admit, appear to be shared by the audience; and, this being so, I came away not at all convinced that the screen version of Mr. James Hilton's novel is a success. I mean as a representation of the author's intention. But as an entertainment it is adequate.

Although a believer in the superior fitness of Americans to make films, no matter what strange European nationalities direct them, I must confess to growing very tired of certain turns of dialogue. For example, the phrase, "You're telling me," has surely earned a rest. And when the picture is wholly invented, as in *That Girl from Paris*, novelty can be too easily sacrified. One does not with any distinctness remember yesterday's films—in fact one can forget them completely almost at once—but I do recall a picture in which, all the way up the nave, the bride is being urged to refuse at the last fence, the altar; and she obeys. In *That Girl from Paris*, all the way up the nave she is similarly encouraged to marry another; and she obeys. The only difference is that in the old film it is her own father who incites her, and in the new film it is her old associates of the "Wild-cat" jazz-band. The authors of the new picture have been so enamoured of this idea that the film also begins with a similar broken wedding.



HIS ENGAGING WAY

Whammo Lonsdale	Jack Oakie
Hamacher	Herman Bing
Butch Strogoff	Mischa Auer
Windy McLean	Gene Raymond
Kitti Monet	Lily Pons
Laughing Boy	Frank Jenks

But as *That Girl from Paris* to a considerable extent puts Jack Oakie back on the map, I must not complain, for Jack is an old favourite of mine. He is still not so good as he was; but he is much more amusing and characteristic than in some recent parts, and his vast smile is very warming. The "girl," for long implacably pursued by the Immigration police and then suddenly emerging as prima donna at the Metropolitan Opera House, is Lily Pons, a star whose top-notes are becoming known all over the world and whose rendering of a famous aria from *The Barber of Seville* by Rossini is the *clou* of the piece—and incidentally far too long. But after Jack Oakie I think most fondly of Herman Bing as the proprietor of the dive.

E. V. L.



Village Storekeeper. "AND HOW ABOUT A BOTTLE OF OUR OPOSSUM PORT, MR. WILKINSON—IN TIME FOR IT TO MATURE IN YOUR CELLAR BEFORE THE TWELFTH?"

The Londoner's Coronation

KEENLY the Cockney waits the Coronation,
Eager to yell and wave a loyal hat;
Lays in his bit of household decoration;
Still, there's a snag; there's no denying that.

Now in the Park where erst he loved to saunter
Snuffing the breeze and conscious of the green
Great grim gaunt stands, growing ever gaunter,
Starkly obtrude their presence on the scene.

Not now for him the elegant narcissus,
Not now the daffodil, known in other years;
Did you but hear his comments to his missus
That would be good strong music on your ears.

So in the Gardens, dear to them that dally,
Kinsmen encamp from many a distant shore;
These he regards, and thinks imperi-ally
Doubtless, but can't stroll there as heretofore.

Now by the shoal official and civilian
Come from afar to sojourn and to gaze
(As he's informed, some quarter of a million)
Mostly with cars which clutter up the ways;

Quickened by guide-book, fortified by lecture,
See where they move or stand about the streets
Picking out bits of noble architecture
Veiled for the nonce by scaffolding and seats.

There too are great stands at enormous prices
Raised for the day by patriots on spec
(Buffet included—sausages and ices),
Who, if God will, may get it in the neck.

So all the town grows stiff with preparation;
Yet, when the far-flung question comes to him
"What are your plans about the Coronation?"
Does not his answer sound a trifle grim?

Not on your life. He'll make a Cockney jest of it;
Trust him for that much. All along the line
Ten deep you'll find him, out to make the best of it.
God save the KING. And send the day be fine.

DUM-DUM.

"Sip! Swallow!"

I LOVE to meet a man with the hiccups—and let me at once dismiss the ignorant notions (*a*) that hiccups are necessarily the result of alcoholic refreshment; and (*b*) that hiccups are spelt hiccoughs—that was a later and a mistaken form and ought, says the *O.E.D.*, "to be abandoned as a mere error."

I delight, I say, to meet a man with the hiccups, because I have a cure for them.

So, without doubt, have you. For this is one of the things that unite the jangling sects and sections of our race. All men have a cure for hiccups. Sometimes, I note, it is the same as the cure for nose-bleeding. You put a rusty key down the back or a piece of brown paper under the upper lip; you eat bread rapidly or hop on one foot. Some treat the sufferer with snuff or pepper, for, according to BACON, "it hath been observed by the Ancients that Sneezing doth cure the Hiccough."

But my cure is infallible; and, since few seem to know it, I nobly tell the nation what it is.

You take a glass of water (though I believe that beer will do as well) and tell the sufferer to put a finger in each ear. (I do not know whether this part of it is mere magic and mystery, or whether there is here some practical question of hydraulics, air-pressure or what-not. At all events, that is what he must do.)

Having done that, he—or she; for, yes, the ladies do have hiccups too—must take from the glass, held out by you, five or six sips of water (or, I believe, beer). Sips—not gulps. "Sip," you say, "Swallow," with a slight pause between. And after the sixth sip I guarantee that the hiccups have gone and will not return for an hour at least.

It never fails. It is magical. I have told struggling doctors about it and they have at once shot up to Harley Street and stayed there. It is noble in me, I repeat, to tell anyone, for the possession of the secret gives me a wondrous sense of power. After all, it is rarely in life that anyone not a doctor can immediately relieve the physical suffering of another; and hiccups are no joke—though they generally are. It is bad enough for us tough men, but imagine the feelings of a delicately-nurtured girl who, at the beginning of a fashionable dinner-party, finds herself making these spasmodic interjections. And I remind you again that they are *not* invariably the consequence of alcoholic refreshment.

The French Ambassador, shall we say, is sitting next to her. "*La Paix*," he is saying gravely, "*est une bonne chose*——" when suddenly, without the slightest warning, "Hic!" goes the poor girl. Or, as the *O.E.D.* more prettily describes the scene, there is "an involuntary spasm of the respiratory organs, consisting in a quick inspiratory movement of the diaphragm checked suddenly by closure of the glottis and accompanied by a characteristic sound."

"Good Lord, the radishes!" she thinks (for I repeat that hiccups are *not* invariably, *etc.*), and faintly hopes that it may prove to be an isolated phenomenon—what they would now call a unilateral hiccup. But no! The French Ambassador is courteously enumerating the sacrifices formidable which the France has made, when "Hic!"—again that involuntary spasm, again the characteristic sound. Hope dies. Concealment is now impossible—he *must* have noticed: and the whole of dinner lies ahead.

The French Ambassador, with native courtesy, notices nothing: but with all his wisdom and knowledge of the world he is powerless to aid her.

But if *I* am sitting on the poor girl's other flank she is saved. True, she looks odd to some of the gilded company, bending over the salmon with her fingers in her ears: but it would be odder still if I put my fingers in her ears, though this works as well. The big thing is that in a minute the menace is averted. And I swear that this is a better way than making her sneeze.

Such assistance is the surest road to a young girl's heart that I know. They never forget. And now I have given my secret to the world. But be careful how you use it. It has led me, I confess, into some uncomfortable corners. Once, in a riverside pub east of the Tower Bridge, I offered my aid to a very large dock-labourer who was suffering from exceptionally large involuntary spasms. At first he thought that I was mocking his misfortune (he particularly distrusted the fingers in the ears); and I nearly received what is commonly the reward of the well-meaning stranger. But I persevered and prevailed; the magic worked, and he followed me dog-like all down Wapping High Street, crying aloud to the unbelieving, "That gentleman can cure the hiccups!"

On another occasion I took a Statesman to the Café ——, the capital of Bohemia. Unaccustomed to lager beer, the Statesman presently began to make characteristic sounds, and, much alarmed, threatened to go to bed. Not wishing to lose the Statesman so soon, I persuaded him to try a sip-swallow. He leaned forward discreetly, fingers in ears, while I served the water and the rest of the company continued to discuss the Education Bill, commodity prices, and the devaluation of the yen. All was going well, the third sip was down, when up came another and less conventional friend of mine. A wild fellow named Jinks, who writes *gossip* for the *wildest* kind of Sunday paper. *I knew that Jinks knew what I was doing, for I had helped him in the same fashion.* And I imagined a dreadful paragraph next Sunday: "Dropping into the Café ——, I found Mr. Haddock curing the Right Honourable —— ——, Minister for ——, of the hiccups."

But I could not stop at the third sip, for the Statesman might suffer for the rest of the evening, and that might make the paragraph worse. There was nothing for it but to introduce Jinks and carry on. "Sip," I said. "Mr. Jinks—Lord Lavender. Swallow. Colonel Groom—my friend Mr. Jinks. Sip. Mr. Cowl. Mr. Jinks. Swallow. Mr. Jinks. Sip. Sir Arthur Mope. Swallow. That ought to be enough."

What a scene! But the Statesman survived, Jinks nobly played the game, and all was well. But that will show you how careful you must be.

And remember that hiccup is *not* spelt hiccough. A *mere* error.

A. P. H.



"EXCUSE ME, SIR, IT'S ALL WRONG TO DO UP THE BOTTOM BUTTON OF THE WAISTCOAT."

"She is a great believer in the importance of a child having real knowledge of the body, instead of allowing it to be wrapped in mystery, and has accordingly included an appendix giving clear details of its workings."—*Book Review in "Sunday Times."*

Isn't this a little over-enthusiastic?

Those Rowing Blues

"PLEASE, Mr. Merryweather, will you row me on the river like you rowed in the Boat-Race?"

"No, Lucy, I cannot."

"Why can't you?"

"Because in the Boat-Race you use only one oar, and to take you on the river I should have to use two, which is much more difficult."

"If you rowed with two oars in the Boat-Race would you go quicker?"

"Certainly."

"They why don't they?"

"Because it is not allowed."

"Come in the boat and show me how you would row in the Boat-Race if it were allowed."

"I do not know how any man could row in the Boat-Race with two oars when everybody else was using one. Don't be so silly."

"Was it nice rowing in the Boat-Race?"

"Not bad."

"Is going to sleep on the grass nicer?"

"Yes, if people let you go to sleep."

"When you have been to sleep will you show me how you rowed in the Boat-Race?"

"No, Lucy, I have been told not to by my doctor."

"Why?"

"Because I rowed too hard when I did row in the Boat-Race and it has made me tired."

"If somebody were drowning, would you row like you rowed in the Boat Race?"

"It depends who was drowning."

"Would you row for me?"

"No, Lucy."

"Why?"

"I should not believe you were drowning."

"Would you if I were grown-up?"

"If you behaved yourself."

"I think someone is drowning, Mr. Merryweather."

"Oh, no, they are not."

"If they were, would you row to them?"

"Oh, how the dickens do I know?"

"If you did row, would you row like you rowed in the Boat-Race?"

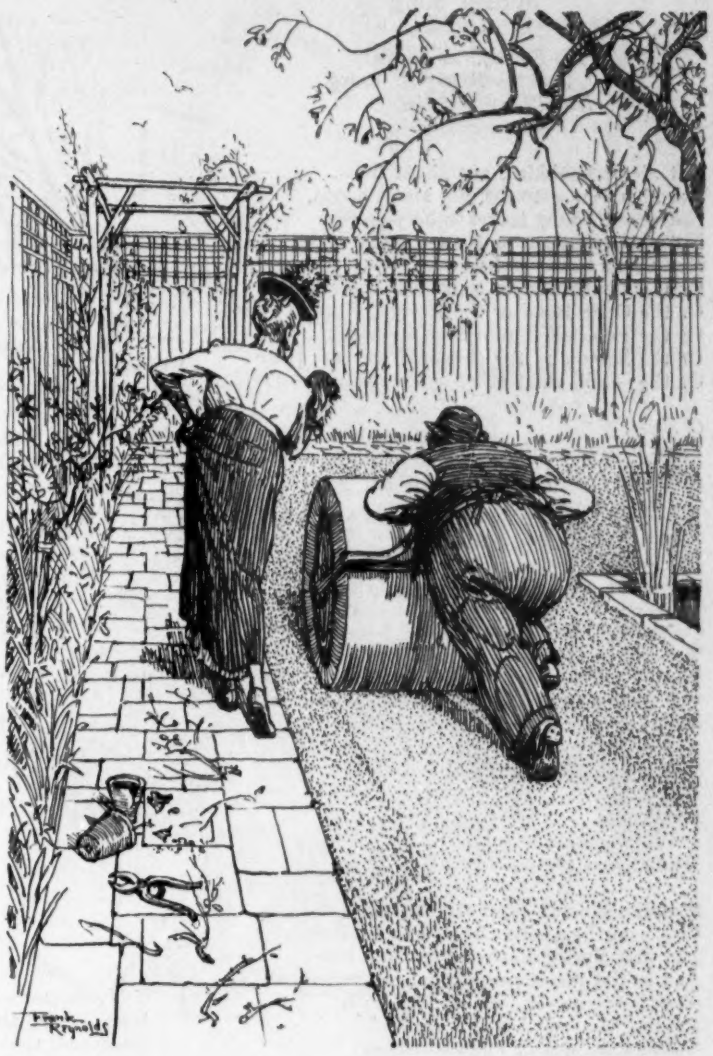
"I have told you a dozen times that it would be impossible."

"Why, Mr. Merryweather?"

"Because with one oar I should go round in circles."

"Why don't they go round in circles in the Boat-Race?"

"Because they have other people pulling the other side to keep them straight."



"I EXPECT YOU REVEL IN THE WIRELESS GARDEN TALKS, MR. SPUD, WHEN YOUR DAY IS DONE."

"Couldn't I row the other side and keep you straight?"

"No, Lucy, you could not."

"Would you row like you would row in the Boat-Race if you had two oars to help the girl next-door?"

"Yes, certainly, I would."

"She's been standing on the other bank, then, Mr. Merryweather, all the time, looking across at you and waving."

"Why did you never say so, then? How long has she been there? Mind out! For goodness' sake, where are the oars? No, please get out of it! No, you cannot untie the rope. No, you cannot come with me. Yes, I do want the cushion. Give that to me. No, no, come here. Out of the way, now, do! No, I shall not be back to tea. Mind out! What? Eh? I can't hear. Oh, yes, yes, for pity's sake, this is how I rowed in the Boat-Race."

"An unemployed youth, who drove a man's car away and smashed it up so badly that it will need a new engine, a new body, and probably a new chassis, was sentenced to one month's hard labour at Long Ashton Petty Sessions."—*Local Paper.*

How about fitting a new car to the dear old windscreen?

Spring Song

'Tis Spring, 'tis Spring,
And the Bard feels strong;
He will rise and sing
You a new song.

Not about lambkins, not about buds,
Not about snowstorms, not about floods,
Not about young leaves yallery-greeny,
Not about HITLER or MUSSOLINI,
Not about Cams or Larks or Ouses
Or County Cricket or Sunshine Cruises
Or the Open Road or the Railway Station
Or the Football Cup or the Coronation
Or the home and the (seasonal) catarrh there
Or the—well, what other subjects *are* there?

O Muse,
From out thy residues
A seemly subject choose.

A song of Spring should have soul and meaning;
I will not sing you about spring-cleaning.
It should be a song that stirs and quickens;
I will not sing you about spring-chickens.
I will not sing of the sun that waxes
Or Daylight Saving or Income Taxes,
Nor will I sully my song and smudge it
By any reference to the Budget;
The Indian Congress I will not mention
Or Stay-in Strikes, Non-Intervention,
A Young Man's Fancy or Clothes or Cupid . . .
So I won't sing anything? Don't be stupid!

Go to, go to!
I will *sing something new.*
(The Muse: *"Sez you!"*)

Something new? But the daffodil yellow
Was sung long since by the other fellow;
The first Spring butterfly for him rose,
And so did the snowdrop and the primrose;
Stale is the crocus with its blue barb
Piercing the soil; banal is rhubarb;
Readers are sick of Flora's benison;
The sea-blue bird was bagged by TENNYSON;



"IT SEEMS TO BE A SORT OF ALPHABET, BUT THAT'S ONLY A GUESS."



Cuckoo. "THAT'S THE FIRST MAN I'VE HEARD SINGING IN MY GARDEN THIS YEAR."

The dormouse waking from winter slumber
Was a good line once, but now—back-number;
And who in the wide world now would care a
Tuppenny damn about Primavera?

Heart-breaking!
I fear I have been making
An ill-considered undertaking;
For a Bard doth more than a rhymer's knack need
For a Song of Spring that won't be hackneyed.

Well, the main thing
(As I said all along)
Is—here comes Spring,
And the Bard feels strong;
And he's tried to sing
You a new song;
Hey ding-a-ding-a-ding,
Hey ding-a-ding-a-dong.
Sorry it all went wrong. H. B.

Elusive as Ever

MYSTERIOUS and elusive are the ways of the Tibetan lamas, even although Hollywood now pretends to have discovered their secrets.

How elusive the Tashi Lama, second figure in the Tibetan hierarchy, can be is evident in the *International Who's Who*, with this entry on page 1014:—

"Tashi Lama (*see* Lo-Pu-T'sang-T'u-Pa-Tan-Ch'u-Chieh-I-Ma-Keh-Leh-K'e-La-Mu-Chieh [Pan-chen Lama])."

But turn to the L section of the work and lo! (if you will pardon us), Lo-Pu, etc., is not there.

Turn we then to "Panchen Lama." Still no entry, but under "Panchan Lama" there is the note—

"(*see* Lo-Pu-T'sang-T'u-Pa-Tan-Ch'u-Chieh-I-Ma-Keh-Leh-K'e-La-Mu-Chieh."

We fear we shall never learn about the Tashi Lama.

"You will have space to breathe in the flats at ——."—*Advt.*
Ah, but how deeply?

"Dartboards, regulation club size, for canaries; state variety."
Advt. in "Cage Birds."
What do the little fellows play on them—hopscotch?

Love-Scene

"Anne," I said, "there is no doubt that you do seem to me at this moment definitely the Season's Most Adorable Deb."

"And why only at this moment?" asked Anne.

"Well," I began judicially, "you see it is only right to tell you, only my duty to tell you that I may very likely not feel like this to-morrow morning. It is now about 2.30 A.M. At 8 A.M., when I must arise and go forth to labour in the fields——"

"Fields?"

"Lincoln's Inn Fields, to be exact. When I get up at 8 A.M. the memory of your fragrant personality may have dimmed—judging by past experience, will have dimmed. Only last week I felt about Barbara very much what I now feel about you. By next morning it had completely worn off. I am versatile, that's the trouble."

"Quite. Except that you mean volatile. Well, it's something to be the Most Adorable Deb for one brief evening. How can I best make use of it? First, you might get me a cold and very long drink."

"Ah, these passionate love-scenes are very exhausting, are they not? Here is your drink. And your mother is looking at me with a suspicious eye—two suspicious eyes, in fact."

"She will probably ask you your intentions."

"And I shall tell her that they are strictly dishonourable. Oh, Anne, why can't this night go on for ever, with you being so adorable, and no to-morrow morning, with you being in memory only a quite ordinary Deb, with a stocky figure, nondescript features and very little sense of humour!"

"Darling, you do have such a sweet way of putting things! Still, I'm adorable now. Tell me more about it."

"Oh, I can't explain it. There's no reason for it at all that I can see. But there it is; it grips the heart."

"And it will be all over to-morrow morning," said Anne pensively. "I wonder—suppose by some queer freak of fate it isn't over to-morrow morning, that when next we meet it's still there . . ."

"Anne, don't," I said hastily—"don't please! You frighten me."

A. W. B.

An Impending Apology

"I have been short of money for years and have done all sorts of jobs—picking hops, working as a chambermaid, and scrubbing floors. I even appeared on the stage in England and Paris."—*Daily Paper.*



Voice over phone. "I WANT ONE ROOM FOR TO-NIGHT, PLEASE. THE NAME IS LUMSDEN—L FOR LUCY, U FOR UNA, M FOR MARY, S FOR STEPHEN, D FOR DICK, E FOR EDITH, N FOR NELLIE."

Proprietress of Country Hotel. "GUIDNESS! ARE THEY A' COMING?"

Ein Complaint

Herr Direktor, ich sent Sie ein cable,
zu frag if some Dinge of mein
in ein drawer in der Ankleide table
gefunden sind. Ja oder nein?

Ein wunderschön Paar Unterpanten;
ein Nachtgown von satin gemacht;
und zwei kleine jade Elephanten,
mein Mann von der Ost mir gebracht.

Und auch, Herr Direktor, ich dinks
dass ein Taschentuch shpotted mit green,
war left in ein Stuhl on die links
of die Lounge bei das photo of Wien.

Ich cabled der Tag before gestern,
Warum kommst es nothing dabei!
Ich bitte Sie machen Ihr bestern
zu schicken mir etwas reply! V. G.

"Groups are arriving daily at Khabarovsk, the Soviet Eastern military centre, and on April 15 two cars attached to the Trans-Siberian train will roll out of Moscow for Vladivostok with a first batch of 6,000 volunteers out of a total of 20,000 drawn from the city."—*News Chronicle.*

Now, London Transport, what about it?



"I DON'T WANT TO APPEAR UNSYMPATHETIC, PROTHEROE, BUT YOU CAN EASILY SEE WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF I ALLOWED ALL MY STAFF TO WEAR THEIR MORTAR-BOARDS BACK-TO-FRONT."

Lady Corisande Explores

FROM Charing Cross to Khatmandhu,
From Piccadilly to Peru,
In countries of the Khan and Kurd
My title is a household word.
Through haunt of crocodile and snake,
Of dusky chief or sinuous sheik
I chase the quagga and giraffe,
The column and the paragraph.
But wheresoe'er I go you find
The camera-man not far behind.
Not his to reap reflected glory
But simply to depict *my* story.
The Paper Public wants its cash back
Unless I smile, complete with yashmak,
(*Herewith*) across its breakfast bacon,
"The famous Lady Traveller taken
Upon her latest daring trip
To interview the Bhoo of Bhip."
Forgive me if I pause to state
I found that pleasing potentate
Susceptible to a degree:
He wished to share his throne with me!
But this of course is nothing new,
When reading (as I hope you do)
"Through Lhasa with a Lipstick," or
"Red Finger-Nails in Ecuador"
(Published at fifteen shillings net,
Ten portraits of myself inset),
You cannot fail to note that ALL
The chiefs I visit promptly fall
For modest simple little me—
I cannot tell why this should be.
But near or far and soon or late
The Art of Dress I cultivate
And spread it widely as I can
With camels and a caravan
(Each camel burdened with a box
Of sheik-subduing Paris frocks).
I gaily journey to and fro,
Collecting copy as I go,
And carry to the utmost earth
The names of MOLYNEUX and WORTH.



THE BOOK OF THE WORDS

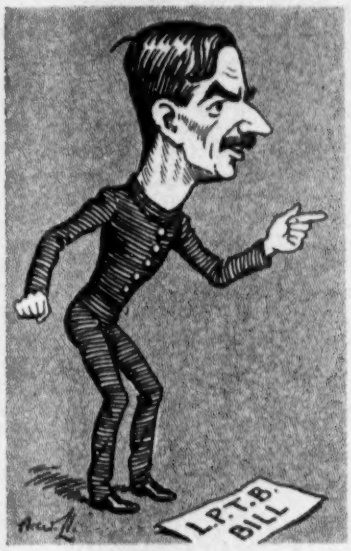
"HERE YOU ARE, SIR! THE ONLY CORRECT CARD."

[By HIS MAJESTY'S permission the Official Souvenir Programme of the Coronation has been issued by King George's Jubilee Trust.]

Impressions of Parliament

Synopsis of the Week

***Monday, April 26th.*—Commons: Special Areas and L.P.T.B. Bills given Third Reading.**



The Thin Boy of Mitcham. "I WANTS TO MAKE YOUR FLESH CREEP."

"I want the Government to have a shock."—*Mr. Eden on the London Passenger Transport Board Bill.*

***Tuesday, April 27th.*—Lords: Debate on Milk Pasteurisation.**
Commons: Debate on Budget Resolutions.

***Wednesday, April 28th.*—Lords: Debate on Peerage Law.**
Commons: Debate on Ministers' Salaries.

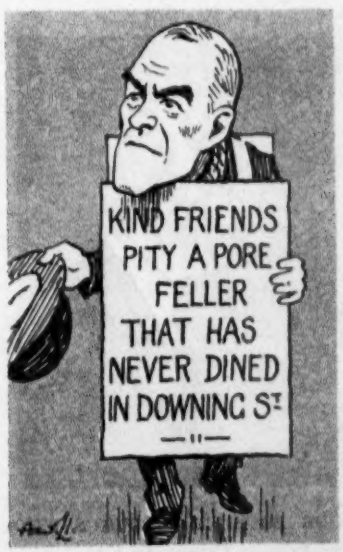
Monday, April 26th.—TIM, which used to call up visions of a tiger to those who came from well-regulated nurseries, is now being more and more associated with the silver voice at the G.P.O. which day and night recites the exact time with unfaltering patience. Nearly ten million subscribers have dialled the magic letters since last July, the P.M.G. announced to-day, and the voice will soon be accessible to other towns.

In answer to Sir CHARLES EDWARDS, Mr. BALDWIN told the House that the Tribunal which had been considering the nationalisation of mining royalties had decided on the sum of £66,450,000 as fair compensation to the owners, and that the Government had accepted the award, which was based on fifteen years of income. It remains to be seen how it will be divided.

The MINISTER OF LABOUR opened the Third Reading Debate on the Special Areas Bill with a final summing-up of its objects, which he said were to extend the power of the Special Commissioner and to attract a wider range of industries to the areas; he was followed by a number of Labour Members who condemned it as inadequate, citing conditions in their own constituencies which they feared it would do nothing to better. For the Liberals, Mr. W. ROBERTS welcomed the Bill, although he regretted its omissions, in particular of any reference to nutrition.

The Third Reading debate on the London Passenger Transport Bill was marked by vehement protest against the crowding of Underground trains during the rush-hours, several Members declaring that the proposed extension of the Morden-Edgware line to Aldenham would only add still more to the congestion. The most interesting speech came from Mr. ATTLEE, in which he deplored the lack of planning which had allowed the speculative builder to fill the north of Middlesex with a mass of ill-considered houses and which was still allowing the chaos to spread through Hertfordshire. He asked, with reason on his side, that housing, transport and amenities should be treated as a whole.

Tuesday, April 27th.—In the Lords this afternoon an announcement by Lord HALIFAX that the Government intended in the near future to table legislation dealing with the cleanliness of milk brought from Lord DAWSON the view that only by a properly organised system of pasteurising milk could a source of grave peril to public health be eliminated.



COLONEL WEDGWOOD CRITICISES MINISTERIAL HOSPITALITY

In the Commons, after both the Liberals and the Socialists in Opposition had unavailingly protested against the rigidity of the trade agreements with Canada the House turned somewhat apprehensively to the National Defence Contribution.



CAVE-MAN No. 1 ON THE WARPATH

SIR ROBERT HORNE EMERGES FROM HIS LAIR

Mr. ALEXANDER led the attack on a levy which he described as adopting the doubtful course of allowing the community to be exploited and then taking back a little of the yield from the profiteer.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN rose immediately to dispel some at least of the misgivings which had arisen in the City. He confessed that he had not been quite prepared for the panic which his proposals had caused, but he urged on the House his entire willingness to consider sympathetically the many instances of hardship which were already being brought to him, and if necessary to give way to the objection that the years 1933–35 were an unfair basis for deciding average profits. Two particular misapprehensions which he was at pains to clear up were that the whole growth of profits above 6% on the capital of a company would be charged at 33⅓%, and that by "the capital" was meant the share capital; whereas it was his intention that the charge should be graduated, and that the capital should be computed from the cost of the assets. In regard to companies with



"I IMAGINE THE NEW ARTERIAL ROAD MAY MAKE SOME DIFFERENCE HERE."

wasting assets and uncertain profits, such as mines, he accepted the suggestion that they merited special treatment, and a variation of interest would therefore be devised for their benefit.

In spite of this conciliatory attitude, Sir ROBERT HORNE remained critical of a tax which seemed to him to form a complete check upon businesses entering on expansion. He told the House that, although the Treasury had estimated the first year's yield at only £2,000,000, he knew of one group of four companies which calculated that its contribution alone would be over £1,000,000. At any rate, he urged, every step should be taken to rid the tax of its anomalies.

Wednesday, April 28th.—A Bill brought in by Lord STRICKLAND to-day to remove some of the conflicts in the peerage laws was withdrawn after it had been described by the LORD CHANCELLOR as only tinkering with the constitution of the House; but at least the debate served to show, as its sponsor remarked, that all parties would be prepared to consider the question of the creation of life-peerages.

In the Commons, after Mr. EDEN had made a brief report on his negotiations with Belgium and assured the House that these would in no way affect Belgium's obligations as a member of the League, he was subjected to the usual barrage of inquiry on Spanish affairs. He was able to announce that he had received assurances from both parties in Spain that they had no intention of using poison-gas, and he promised that he would do all he could to prevent another aerial bombardment of an open town, such as had just annihilated the Basque capital. The indignation of the House at this barbarous massacre of civilians by the rebel forces found strong expression.



OUR BACK-BENCH *WHO'S WHO*

Sir EDWARD CAMPBELL's hobby
Is being a special bobby.
He was Vice-Consul in Java
Before joining the Thames-side Palava.

When the Bill dealing with Ministers' salaries was taken in Committee the not unhumorous situation arose of the ATTORNEY-GENERAL being put up by the Government to defend the traditional arrangement by which he and the SOLICITOR-GENERAL receive fees for their conduct of Crown cases which bring them a total income three or four times as large as that of the PRIME MINISTER. And this, as Mr. LEES-SMITH suggested, in spite of the fact that on the side of hospitality it is not incumbent on the Law Officers to stand anyone so much as a bun.

The Perils of Politeness

DURING the lunch-hour rush one day last week I boarded a West-bound bus at Piccadilly Circus and was lucky enough to secure a seat on the lower deck. When the bus pulled up opposite the Ritz a horde of other travellers got in, among them a tired-looking lovely, to whom, mindful of "the training that from cot to castle runs," I cheerfully resigned my seat.

"Oh, thenks so much," said the tired-looking lovely without enthusiasm, and I propped myself up precariously in the aisle. At Hyde Park Corner I was ruthlessly ejected from the bus by the conductor, who descended from Olympus and told me that standing was not allowed. The T.L.L. was immersed in a copy of *Poppy's Own*, and ostentatiously refrained from taking any part in the discussion. I like to think that she was deaf.

I mentioned the matter to Battersby at the club that evening. I had been smarting all the afternoon under a sense of injustice and felt the need of human sympathy.

"The trouble with you," said Battersby, "is that you haven't a logical mind. When you gave up your seat to that girl you gave up with it your legal right to remain on board the bus. Chivalry, if it is to have any meaning at all, must be thorough-going and sincere; there can be no half-measures.

"That's all very well," said I, "but in this case——"

"A young nephew of mine," went on Battersby, filling his pipe from my tobacco-pouch, "had a rather trying experience not long ago, solely on account of his gentle upbringing. He had dropped in at one of the big Oxford Street shops to buy a wedding-present for a friend, and as he came out he rashly held the swing-door open to allow two ladies to precede him. The two ladies were followed by an apparently unending stream of other ladies, for it was a busy time of the day, and my nephew found himself in something of a quandary. Politeness dictated that he should continue to prop the door open, and after about an hour he began to feel drowsy. Counting women coming out of a shop, he found, had an even more soporific effect than counting sheep going over a gate.

"Lunch-time came, and with it the pangs of hunger, but the spate of females showed no signs of abating, and my nephew, a modern Casabianca, stuck grimly to his post. He stood there, faint and famished, holding the door wide open and meekly acknowledging the perfunctory thanks of perspiring shopperesses. At about four o'clock he was discovered by an acquaintance, who asked him if he was doing it for a bet.

"'For Heaven's sake,' gasped the unhappy youth, 'prop this door open for me while I go and get a bite to eat. I give you my word of honour I'll come back and relieve you in half-an-hour.'

"'I can't very well do that, old boy,' answered the other, 'but I'll tell you what I *will* do. I'll go and buy you some sandwiches and a bottle of beer. That ought to keep you going till closing-time.'

"I don't know," continued Battersby, "if you have ever attempted to eat a crab-sandwich, open a ginger-beer bottle and hold back a heavy swing-door at one and the same time. If you have you may be disposed to take a more tolerant view of my nephew's conduct than did the jury in the subsequent action for damages. For one fatal second the wretched youngster relaxed his vigilance, the swing-door slipped from his grasp, and an elderly dowager, laden with parcels, was sent reeling back against the perfumery counter. She sustained a fractured collar-bone and several minor injuries, and was awarded two or three hundred pounds as compensation. The judge, I remember, delivered himself of some caustic comments on the manners of the rising generation."

"What did he say?" I asked.

"He said," replied Battersby, rising and putting my matches into his pocket, "that horse-whipping was too mild a penalty for the young man who would deliberately slam a heavy door in the face of an elderly lady."

Newspaper Woman

"Her father was Irish and her mother Sunday Express."—*Melbourne Paper.*

"TIGHT RINGS REMOVED WHILE YOU WAIT."
Notice in Jeweller's Window.

So much better than calling back for the finger in half-an-hour.



"MAY I ASK WHAT YOU PROPOSE TO DO WITH SKATES AT THE OPERA, HORACE?"

At the Play

"BLACK LIMELIGHT" (ST. JAMES'S)

THIS is a play in which crime is employed not as a spring-board for detailed detection but as a motive-force for a study of human character under extreme pressure. The police side of the case is incompetently conducted and of little importance; what matters—and Mr. GORDON SHERRY, the author, makes it matter very much—is the states of mind produced by the crime in two people. It is a play of distinct originality, and, most effectively produced by Mr. CAMPBELL GULLAN, it has the added merit of providing Miss MARGARET RAWLINGS with a part which scarcely lets her off the stage and which allows her a wide field for the exercise of her talent.

For their man to have been on the run for a month may be a commonplace in the life of gangsters' molls, but to an English suburban wife it must be a very unnerving experience. *Mary Charrington* (Miss RAWLINGS) had stood up to it well, being a girl of courage and understanding, and she had retained her faith in *Peter* (Mr. JOHN ROBINSON) in spite of the strength of circumstantial evidence which pointed to him as the murderer of the mistress whose existence she had never even suspected. A traveller in refrigerators, he had been in the habit, the police discovered, of snatching brief holidays with the girl in a lonely seaside bungalow which he kept for the purpose; they also found the usual motive in a crime of this sort, and as *Peter* had immediately taken to the *maquis*, so to speak, the case against him was as black as it could be.

Ignorant of *Peter's* whereabouts, running short of money, fiercely proud and pestered by police and Press, *Mary* was encouraged in her ordeal by kind neighbours, a faithful maid and an old friend who was a lawyer, *Lawrence Manfred* (Mr. LAWRENCE ANDERSON). As her adviser this gentleman shocked me, I confess, by accepting without demur a tender of £750 for the entire rights in her story, for I believe it is generally recognised that any legal man who fails to treble the first offer of a sensational newspaper is a blot on his profession. Another slight weakness in the early scenes was the merciless behaviour of the Inspector-in-charge, who hectored *Mary* with a brutality which I feel sure plays no part in the technique of the English police. But these are small points, to which I will only add the absurd inadequacy, which became more and more apparent as the evening went on, of the cordon drawn round the *Charringtons'* house.



THE NYCTALOPS

The first to slip through it was the hunted man himself, worn out but vehemently protesting his innocence. In the scenes which followed, carrying us to the end of the Second Act, he and *Mary* thrashed out their new situation. While he lay in a coma of exhaustion on the sofa, *Mary*, in a soliloquy which Miss RAWLINGS delivered most movingly, faced the tragic change in their personal relationship; and afterwards, when she had persuaded him to give her a full account of the night of the crime, we were taken back to the bungalow, where Miss RAWLINGS added further to her capful of honours by a brilliant doubling in the part of the Cockney mistress. Towards the end of the scene *Peter* went off to the village for candles, and we saw the last stub gutter out as a dark figure crept into the little room and killed the girl. Who could it have been?

We believed *Peter's* story, and so did *Mary*, but the circumstances of the crime suggested that it was the work of a maniac who might himself have remained ignorant of its commission. I shall say nothing of the Third Act except that it maintained the continuous excitement and interest of the play, to which I heartily recommend a visit.

Mr. ROBINSON'S acting as *Peter* was all that it should have been. He gave an intense impression of a man stunned by fatigue almost to the point of detachment, and he was an admirable complement to Miss RAWLINGS. As the friend on whose legal capacity alone I have cast doubt, Mr. ANDERSON'S performance was firm and effective, and as *Jemima*, the maid, Miss ETHEL COLERIDGE filled out with humour and sympathy what might have been a small part into one of broader significance. ERIC.

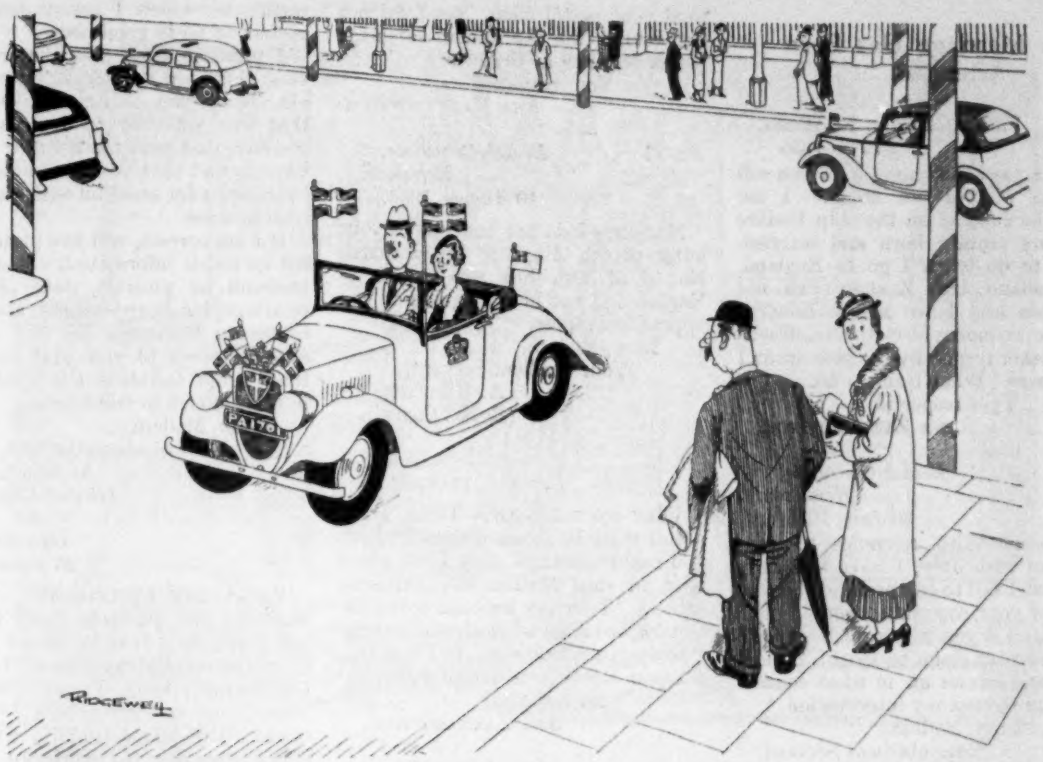


PRESSING HIM TO TELL

Peter Charrington . . MR. JOHN ROBINSON
Mary Charrington . . MISS MARGARET RAWLINGS

"HENRY V." (THE OLD VIC)

For the Coronation season the Old Vic, on other occasions the scene of so much energetic and uncompromising tragedy, has put its warlike colour on and with much imagination is staging SHAKESPEARE'S *Henry V.* in all the glory of his youthful prime. To a generation well accustomed to hearing that war is no longer what it was, here is corroboration indeed, for we see with our own eyes the easiest and most memorable of English campaigns; and the twentieth century no less than the sixteenth can enjoy the rhetoric with which the clumsy hosts of Frenchmen are quickly overthrown, and can feel the relief



"LOOK, GEORGE—ROYALTY."

at the happy ending of a Shakespearean historical play, when the meagre English casualty list, in which the *Duke of York* is the chief loss, is followed by a marriage which confirms the conquest.

Mr. TYRONE'S GUTHRIE'S production is particularly good in the camp scenes, where he uses subdued lighting and shadow to give the impression that there are far more people on the stage than is in fact the case, for large as is the Old Vic cast, it remains undoubtedly somewhat smaller than the few, "the happy few, the band of brothers," who won so much glory. It is made fewer by the early disappearance of *Bardolph* (Mr. JAMES HOYLE), for he has stolen a pig and a'hanged he must be; but plenty of his more fortunate comrades-in-arms, notably the Welshman, *Fluellen* (Mr. FREDERICK BENNETT), are, till the final curtain, a host in themselves.

There are few Shakespearean plays in which the comic scenes are more apt as commentary on the main theme, for here the language, the brawls, the careful forethought of the prudent and the reckless living for the day of the less thoughtful soldiers of fortune show the plain and often sordid background to the ornate tapestry of *Henry's* successful claim to the throne of France. That claim is asserted by Mr. LAURENCE OLIVIER with a rising passion. He shows himself an increasingly formidable enemy, till the action finally dies away in the quieter relief of the deliberately stilted love-making with *Katherine*.

The opening scene is the weakest, for the *Archbishop of Canterbury* and the *Bishop of Ely* are more like a pair of sly topers planning to get free drinks than ecclesiastical statesmen gravely perturbed that a wild young Prince of Wales has succeeded to the throne and may all too probably prove lacking in essential reverence for things ecclesiastical. To deflect him against the French is a master-stroke of policy, and it should have been introduced with a graver touch.

But if the Churchmen are made rather contemptible the French are not. It is very easy to make of the *Dauphin* (Mr. STEPHEN MURRAY) and his companions coddled and panic-stricken poltroons, and this temptation is firmly conquered at the Old Vic. It is conquered because it is undoubtedly present, and once or twice the audience is moved to a laughter of derision which, if it were further indulged, would rob the scenes in the English camp and the suspense of battle against great odds of most of their hold. As it is, the proportion is so nicely held, Mr. OLIVIER is so convincing as a king who understands the leadership of soldiers and who mingles freely in the camp, being familiar and yet remaining a figure apart, that the action passes all too quickly and we feel we have been initiated into this great adventure only to be turned out too soon into the night.

We may know from the three parts of *Henry VI.* that the conclusion of the great business is in every way disappointing—that the king who speaks in this play to such purpose on the real meaning of kingship is to be dead in a few years, leaving an infant son and a heritage of trouble for half-a-century. But that is the future, and in *Henry V.* there is seized and displayed the one bright moment when the kingdom is united behind its youthful head—so united that *Scrope* and *Grey* and *Cambridge*, the three traitors so triumphantly unmasked on the eve of departure for France, confess with a wholehearted and immediate self-abasing contrition reminiscent of the recent Moscow trials and illustrative of the common acceptance through Lancastrian England of the king as the nation's real head. D. W.

A Marriage Has Been Arranged . . .

Village Garastia, Ruritania.
26 *Juli* 1936

YOUR EXCELLENTLY,—Now you will tell me what I am doing. I am Britische subjekt on the ship Redfire with my mother born and married. What to do when I go to England. My husband, Ivan Zaxharovitch, not goodman and leave me in London, Ontario, no money no clothes on streets. My mother respire by the boat when I come here. What I am to do.

Your respectid
ANA ZAXHAROVITCH.

No. 51 *British Consulate,*
Kerestovo.
30 *July*, 1936.

MADAM,—With reference to your letter of 26th July, I have to inform you that I fail to comprehend the contents of your communication. I shall be obliged if you will furnish me with proof of your claim to British nationality, and advise me in what connection you request my intervention.

I am, Madam,
Your obedient Servant,
A REDTAPE
(*British Consul*).

Village Garastia
4 *Agust* 36

YOUR EXCELLENTLY,—Coming behind your postal male. See I did not understand the Ruritanian language please to write in Britische.

Your respectid
ANA ZAXHAROVITCH.

No. 73 *British Consulate,*
Kerestovo.
10 *August*, 1936.

MADAM,—I do not understand your letter of 4th August. My despatch No. 51 of 30th July was written in English and not in Ruritanian as you appear to suppose.

I am, Madam,
Your obedient Servant,
A. REDTAPE
(*British Consul*).

Garastia,
14 *Agust* 36

VERY EXCELLENTLY,—Today I get postal male 10 Agust despatch about you not understand. Say I tell you I born in ship Redfire and Britische subjekt. Ivan my husband leave me Ontario no money no clothes on streets. What you say I do now. In I sent you passport Britische marriage paper.

Your respectid
ANA ZAXHAROVITCH.

No. 79 *British Consulate,*
Kerestovo.
20*th August*, 1936.

MADAM,—In reply to your letter of 14th August, I have to inform you that your passport and marriage certificate, which I return herewith, appear to be in good order.

I presume from your letters that your husband, Ivan Zaxharovitch, abandoned you in London, Ontario, that you returned to Ruritania by steamer, that your mother died on the voyage, and that you want assistance in tracing your husband with a view to maintenance.

If I am correct, will you please give me as much information about your husband as possible, date of your marriage, his disappearance, and your return to Ruritania, his last whereabouts known to you, and any clue that would facilitate the authorities in their efforts to trace him?

I am, Madam,
Your obedient Servant,
A. REDTAPE
(*British Consul*).

Garastia,
25 *Agust* 36.

YOUR VERY EXCELLENTLY,—Paper marriage and passport came behind and thank you. Ivan he leave me with no money no clothes on streets London Ontario and respire. I not can tell you where Ivan is whereabouts. He respired about Kings Jubility. Back in ship mother deceded overboard. I tell you ivan good in water bad in gin. I sent you foto Ivan in water.

Your very respectid
ANA ZAXHAROVITCH.

No. 83 *British Consulate,*
Kerestovo.
30 *August*, 1936.

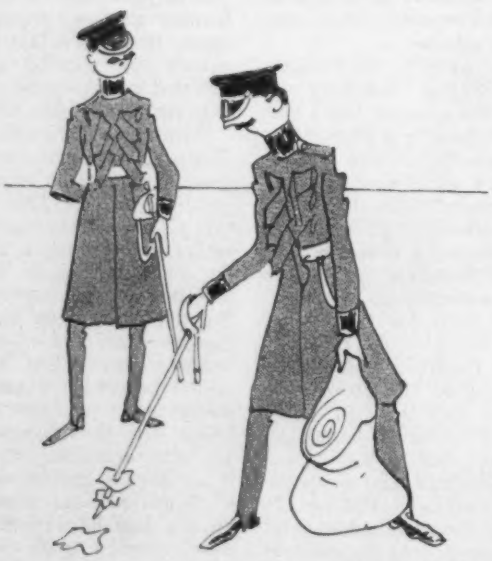
MADAM,—It is useless for this correspondence to continue any longer as your written language is quite incomprehensible. I suggest that you obtain the help of somebody capable of composing your letters in English, or, perhaps, write them in Ruritanian, a language with which I am conversant.

I enclose herewith the photograph of your husband sent to me under cover of your letter of 25th August, and refer you to para. 3 of my despatch No. 79 of 20th August.

I am, Madam,
Your obedient Servant,
A. REDTAPE
(*British Consul*).

Village Garastia,
3 *Septr* 36

EXCELLENTLY, — Why not before you not tell me you not understand the britische. I not know the ruritanian talk and I speak but not write the Russian. I not know any britische man in village. Mayor he tell me he know Ostralay talk. He



"FRANKLY, TUPPY, I THINK YOU 'RE DOING MORE HARM THAN GOOD."



"I MUST BE GETTING DOWN TO CHERTON PARVA TO-MORROW FOR THE CORONATION."

been was in Sidni. But I not know Ostralay talk. Foto ivan came behind postal male. What I to do. No money no clothes street garastia. I like go England for conoration time perhaps I will get ship behind to Montreal. Say Consul I half nuts.

Your respectid
ANA ZAXHAROVITCH.

No. 101 *British Consulate,*
Kerestovo.
10 *September*, 1936.

MADAM,—Until you provide me with the information asked for in para. 3 of my despatch No. 79 of 20 August, I decline to reply to any further communications from you.

You must understand that it is most important to locate your husband to enable the proper authorities to arrange for your maintenance. Until this is done I can take no further action on your behalf.

I am, Madam,
Your obedient servant,
A. REDTAPE
(*British Consul*).

Garastia
15 *Septr* 36.

EXCELLENTLY,—I cant read them long words but mayor what speaks ostralay can he says you say I know where ivan husband is whereabouts. Perhaps I know but I not write it. what to do with me excellently.

Your respectid
ANA ZAXHAROVITCH.

No. 105 *British Consulate,*
Kerestovo.
21 *September*, 1936.

MADAM,—In view of your refusal to divulge the whereabouts of your husband, I am unable to afford any more assistance.

Should you reconsider your decision, however, I advise you to ask the mayor to write your letters for you. For your information, English is the language spoken in Australia.

I am, Madam,
Your obedient Servant,
A. REDTAPE
(*British Consul*).

Garastia.
26 *Septr* 36.

VERY EXCELLENTLY,—mayor he tell me what you write about. He read postal male but I not understand his talks. He say you want present where is whereabouts of husband ivan. He respired I tell you. Him mayor say no respired for dead man but aspired. Ivan aspired London, Ontario, and leave me no money no clothes on streets. Whereabouts I think near gin bottle in never regions what you say. What you to do with me. I want get behind to Canada.

Your respectid
ANA ZAXHAROVITCH.

Garastia,
29 *Septr* 36.

EXCELLENTLY,—I not more want ship behind to Canada. Mayor he read postal male with me and he start talk wednesday and we get spoused sunday. He say in Ostralay they talk espliced. Thank excellently for postal male.

Your respectid
ANA ZAXHAROVITCH.

Another "Association Catalogue"

(With acknowledgments to Messrs. Elkin Mathews, Ltd., and theirs)

1 ABRA (ABRACAD). 'STRUTH. Cairo, 1921. £12

FIRST EDITION. Original cloth, cr. 8vo.

The author's own copy of this exceedingly rare book, only two other copies of which are known to exist, one being in the Presidential Library at Washington and the other now at the bottom of the Regent's Park lake after ten years' service in propping up a rickety table in Belli's. On the half-title are two beer-stains and these words in Abra's handwriting: "The only book I ever wrote about the working of a turnip-slicer. In fact the only book I ever wrote."

2 ACKING-CORFE (A. N.) MY LIFE AND LOVES. 1921. 2/-

FIRST EDITION, in the dust-wrapper which was afterwards withdrawn.

This copy is historic, being that which the author sent to the publisher with his demand for a different dust-wrapper, and also that which the publisher abusively returned with the words—which are scrawled on the end-paper—"We have enough copies of this damned book in the office already." On the flap of the wrapper Acking-Corfe has written, "Surely there is some mistake in this picture—I do not look like a baboon." The purchaser of this unique copy will be able to form his own opinion.

3 CHOP (CHUMP). CHUMP CHOPS, BEING THE REMINISCENCES OF A CUTTER. Sheffield, Wednesday (N.D.). 30/-

Presentation copy, signed, from the author to Sir Gurnard Hake, who has pencilled notes on many pages. On page 87, beside the fourth line ("He collapsed in a heap"), are the words "What of? G. H." Similar remarks appear on every page after the ninetieth, and in the margin of page 43, which is devoted to a highly detailed description of the commercial manufacture of cocoa butter, is the inscription: "Boom, boom, boom, tum tum tarara boom. Boom, boom, boom. Boom. G. H." As Sir Gurnard Hake was well known to have no ear for music it is probable that this note refers to some alterations to his yacht.

4 GOIL (ELIZABETH A. SWEET). RHYMES OF A RUSSOPHOBE. London, 1928. 3/6

Presentation copy, inscribed "To dear Henry, from Hiz Liz. July, 1928. The Nevsky Prospekt pleases And only man is vile." "Henry" is probably Henry Chuggins, after-married by Miss Goil, if anyone cares (besides Henry).

5 HAMBONE (B. I. G.). QUADRILATERALS AND SUCH. 1907. 5/-

FIRST EDITION. Original cloth, with the 3 pp. of advertisements at the end.

A fine copy of Professor Hambone's first book, in which he exhaustively worked out his idea that all quadrilaterals containing no angle greater than 180° are either cyclic or "cyclic and in perspective."

This copy belonged to Professor Snootlegrab, and probably—if we know anything about the man we got it from—still does.

6 JUSST (ONEY). NOT QUITE. London, 1920. £7

Presentation copy from the Author, inscribed "To my very dear friend Tomato Fishcake. Oney Jusst, November 16, 1920." Beneath is written in a different hand, quivering with something (probably indignation): "He got my name wrong, a train was passing at the time. Tomasso Finchgate, Jr."

7 MUPP (RHODOMONTADAMUS). ESSAYS. 1929. £1

On the flyleaf is written, "To his Aunt from Rhodomontadamus, on the occasion of someone or other's twenty-first birthday (I'll lay a quid)."

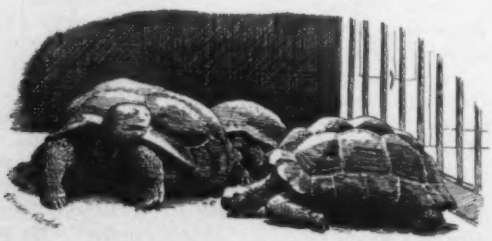
This is a highly interesting copy, though mutilated. The essays called "Profane Love" and "What I Say About Sex" have been torn out, possibly by Mupp before he sent the book, possibly by his aunt after she got it. In either event it is probable that they will turn up sooner or later in a separate cover.

8 OSHKOSHNIK (OLGA FYODOREVNA). THE FOUR GORGES. New York, 1901. 7/6

Presentation copy from the Author, inscribed "From your little Olenka, in memory of many happy days at Padstow, Plaistow, Chepstow and Walthamstow." On the half-title is written in a different hand: "Eggs, milk, cheese. Bread, butter. Fish? (Ask Boris.) Beef? Veal? Slide-rule, icing-sugar, piano. Samovar. Orchid (? two). Horse." This probably has nothing to do with us, but it is certainly chockful of associations.

9 SMOJK (OLE). ORIGINAL SHOOTING SCRIPT FOR THE FILM "PROBABLY ITS CAUSE" (1932). £10

Typewritten on 150 quarto pages, loosely sewn, with many notes throughout in Smojk's handwriting. "Probably Its Cause" was the first film of importance directed by Smojk, but he does not seem to have been overcome by the solemnity of the occasion. Dotted about the typescript are highly uncomplimentary remarks about nearly all the actors and actresses concerned; "Looks like a walrus" beside the name of the character played by Miss —— is possibly the kindest. On the next page, beside the same name, Smojk has written, "Also sounds like a walrus," and some five or six pages later, where the character reappears, are the scrawled words "By Pudovkin, I believe she *is* a walrus."



"THAT MAKES THE THIRD WINTER HE'S KEPT ME AWAKE WITH HIS SNORING."



"THERE'S A LOT OF PEOPLE, MISS, WHO WON'T BELIEVE ANYTHING UNLESS THEY SEE IT WRITTEN DOWN IN RED, WHITE AND BLUE."

10 WOOF (WARPAN). HOBO SAPIENS, AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY. London, N.D. 30/-
FIRST EDITION, original sacking, uncut, cr. 8vo.
Presentation copy from the Author, inscribed "Here you are, blast you," but unsigned. Presentation copies of Warpan Woof are exceedingly scarce and it is probable that this one was extracted from him at the point of a gun.
There is a dead spider between pp. 22 and 23. R. M.

The Southern Sea-Wall

LEAN against these white stones,
Watch the sea coming in.
We are sleepy with salt and pine-cones
But the gulls wait on with their legs curled thin
Like merrythought-bones.

Here is no age, no time,
No sorrow of season,
Only this wall washed whiter than lime
And the sea coming in without reason
With infinite rhyme. O. D.

R.S.B.A.

Mr. Punch has much pleasure in pointing out that the Royal Society of British Artists is now holding its Coronation Exhibition at the Suffolk Street Galleries, Pall Mall.

This collection of works by past and present members of the Society, which forms an interesting complement to the R.A. Exhibition at Burlington House, will remain on view until June 5th.



"I SAW LORD BLANK STEPPING OUT OF A BUS AGAIN TO-DAY. SEE THAT HIS ACCOUNT IS SENT TO HIM IMMEDIATELY."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Devastating

MARSHAL EMILIO DE BONO, with his white beard, sitting squarely on his gallant grey, looks in the historic phrase "a nice old gentleman for a small tea-party." But appearances are deceptive. He was athirst for military glory and approaching the age when retirement seemed inevitable. Consequently, as he writes in *Anno XIIII.* (CRESSET PRESS, 12/6), war with Abyssinia having been decided upon, he stipulated with the DUCE that he should be granted the honour of conducting the campaign. This, one notes, was in the autumn of 1933. MUSSOLINI consented, and ordered him to go "full speed ahead." So the future Marshal, fired with patriotic ardour, set to work on the elaborate preparations that were necessary before the crime of the new Italian Empire could be achieved. There were many difficulties in the way. The blameless Ethiopian simply would not give an excuse for attack, so eventually his frontiers must be crossed without any formal declaration of war. Then there were what the translator persists in calling "logistical" problems, by which he means us to understand difficulties in the quartermaster's department. Marshal DE BONO did good work here, and employed money to advantage in bribing local chieftains. But he saw no fighting worth mentioning and manifests some natural annoyance with the enemy for never giving him the chance of a really satisfactory massacre. His book is a dry account of his preparations for the final victory which he was not allowed to witness. MUSSOLINI was in a hurry. The war had to be over by 1936, and DE BONO was not advancing fast enough, so he was superseded. But he was made a Marshal, and the DUCE has written a commendatory preface to his book—which is perhaps an excess of candour but adds interest to an historical document.

Ataturk and Allah

By his assumption of the entertaining surname of ATATURK, with its humorous possibilities, MUSTAPHA KEMAL PASHA did not dissipate one's dislike of his dictatorial ways. However, much misunderstanding of this remarkable Turk's intentions and deeds will be cleared up by Miss LILO LINKE's lively though too often sentimental account of her travels through Asia Minor, where an *Allah Dethroned* (CONSTABLE, 15/-) has been replaced by an ATATURK ruling with at least a more openly omnipresent hand. For this eponymous "Father of the Turks" benevolently looks after the welfare of his compatriots down to the smallest detail. He has reformed them—literally as regards clothes—out of all recognition. The bowler has replaced the fez as the outward symbol of respectability and a modernist attitude of mind. Thereby the final confutation has been given to KIPLING's belief in the irreconcilability of East with West. The twain have at last met on the head of a modern Turk.

Nevertheless it is debatable whether Allah will not outstay ATATURK in the long run. To-day ATATURK'S will is supreme. To-morrow, as yesterday, it may again be the will of Allah.

A Liberal Educator

BUSBY or KEATE would perhaps have felt a grim satisfaction had one of his old pupils told him that he remembered no day in his school which had not been exciting. The confession pleased Mr. GUY KENDALL, who was for twenty years headmaster of University College School, for another reason. Not that he would, or did, spare the rod under whatever provocation, but his main and most laudable aim as an educator has been to make education interesting. And from a reading of *A Headmaster Reflects* (HODGE, 7/6) it would seem very probable that he has succeeded, for he is a true humanist with a sense of humour which is not of the usual pedagogic type. In these chapters he examines almost every aspect, from the most public to the most intimate, of a large and various subject; and on all he has wise words to say. He never dogmatises, for he is aware that to many of the questions involved there is more than one defensible answer and, though a reformer and impatient of certain hoary and sentimental catchwords, he knows the value of traditions and loyalties. Nor, though a believer in the psychological approach, has he any good word for those remarkable establishments where self-expression is encouraged even unto assault and battery on the *soi-disant* masters. He is, in short, sane.

Not for Hikers

Mr. PHILIP GOSSE has a good many different ways of attracting your attention in *Travellers' Rest* (CASSELL, 8/6). It opens with an essay on walking, and the picture on the wrapper suggests that it is a book for walkers. That it certainly is not. It is a book for country-men, but there are many various kinds of country-men and you have to be the right kind. Apparently he set out to write a book about walking and found when he got to the end of it and was doing the chapter on "Sportsmen, Nudists and Naturalists" that, as he confesses, he ought never to have embarked on an undertaking for which he was so unfitted. He has instead put together a very readable miscellany of scraps of information and gossip on a hundred-and-one (or even more) topics; but it is only fair that the hiker should be warned off—Mr. GOSSE'S typical hiker, that is, who, when the village clergyman inquired if he were hiking, replied, "Yes, in every —— joint."

A Saint's Tragedy

It were to be wished that Mr. JAMES HILTON had not referred with quite such persistent iteration to the hero of *We Are Not Alone* (MACMILLAN, 6/-) as "the little doctor." In the first place the epithet irresistibly recalls that little man who had a busy day—as indeed *Dr. Newcome* usually had; in the second, it gives an air of sentimentality to what is saved, though only just saved, by its integrity from being a sentimental story. *Dr. Newcome* belonged to the "pure fool" type, which, perhaps as a protest against the violence and vindictiveness of the actual world, has lately been appearing with some frequency in fiction: M. DUHAMEL'S *Salavin* being an outstanding example. A skilled physician and something of a philosopher, a paragon of gentleness, sympathy and selfless devotion, he managed his personal affairs with singular inefficiency. The society of cathedral towns in general and his wife—a dean's daughter and as aggravating as she was often not unpardonably aggravated—in particular being what they were, he might have known that he was asking for trouble when he introduced a German dancer, whose arm he had mended and whom he had saved from suicide, into his house as governess to an abnormally nervous son. To what dreadful issue his chivalry actually led is expounded



EMINENT ACADEMICIAN SELECTS A PLACE FOR THE SUMMER HOLIDAYS.

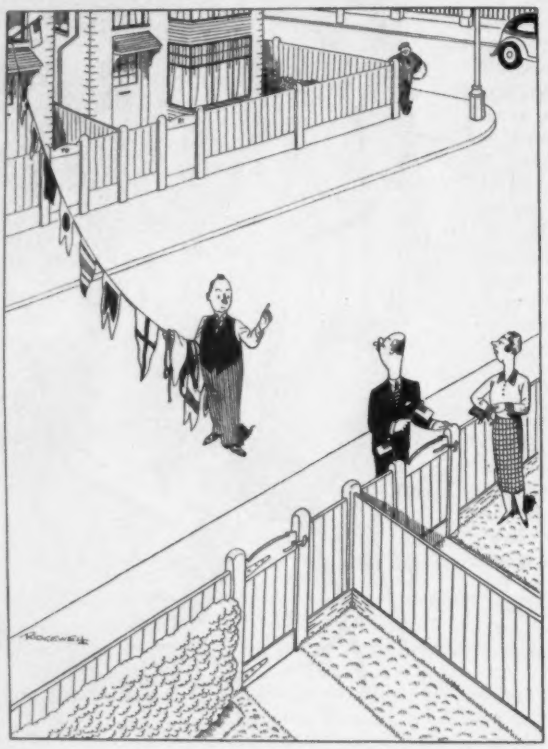
by Mr. HILTON in a very short novel which is very deftly constructed and delicately written.

Laughter

"I must warn you, reader, that it is not the purpose of this book to make you laugh." So Mr. MAX EASTMAN disingenuously begins the preface to his *Enjoyment of Laughter* (HAMISH HAMILTON, 12/6), a monumental and monumentally funny analysis of that fascinating subject. Mr. EASTMAN has consulted a tremendous number of professional humorists and quotes them at splendid length, and he disagrees most reasonably with nearly all the people who have written about laughter before. One inch of the index to these four hundred pages implies his range: "Marx, Chico; Marx, Groucho; Marx, Harpo; Marx, Karl." An admirable section of thirty or forty pages elaborates and explains the "ten commandments of the comic arts," which should be pasted in the hat of everyone who has ever tried to be funny. Here, in short, is a "handbook in the art of taking comic pleasure," illustrated—both verbally and pictorially—by very many of those best able to give it; a book which, though possibly not the most profound ever written on the subject, is without any doubt at all the most entertaining.

River Scenes

The photographs by Mr. H. E. TURNER in *Thames Portrait* (NICHOLSON AND WATSON, 15/-) are a joy to behold, but Mrs. E. ARNOT ROBERTSON is a lady of pronounced opinions and some of her letterpress may be thought unduly provocative. Beauty, of which she is by no manner of means unaware, is at times submerged because boring or "feudal" people, as she made her way in a boat that looked like an "ice-cream barrow" from Gloucestershire to the sea, aroused her anger and misdirected her attention. Safely in her boat and writing of birds and whatnot, Mrs. ARNOT ROBERTSON is delightful, but when she forsakes the river for the land it is not so easy to follow her. Oxonians, for instance, may be surprised to hear that their High Street is "undistinguished." The last chapters of the book, "London River," "Barge Days" and "River into Sea," are, however, charming. In them a real tribute is paid both to the Thames and to the many attractive and skilled men who frequent it.



"THANK YOU, MR. HALLIWELL, I THINK NOT. WE PREFER TO CARRY OUT OUR OWN SCHEME OF DECORATION."

An Exceptional Novel

Lady TWEEDSMUIR, who still writes as SUSAN BUCHAN, has taken the title of her novel, *The Scent of Water* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 7/6), from the text in Job which tells how that particular perfume will cause an apparently dead tree to bud. Her heroine, *Margaret Gerard*, a pleasant young woman leading a mildly selfish life, half social, half artistic, and thinking herself in love with a rather empty young man, is the dead tree; and it is through a visit to one of the workless Welsh valleys—where she meets people with another scale of values and a man who prefers service to servants—that she becomes the beautiful thing of which she gave little promise. This epitome makes it sound a novel with a purpose, but, though no one could read it without some stirrings of conscience as to the out-of-work miners, it is scarcely that. It bears the marks of haste in an insistence on unhelpful detail, and the Welsh dialogue is not typical; but the book is pleasant reading and its sincerity and seriousness make it a refreshing exception to the rule among modern fiction.

Understudy

An intelligent boy-scout and a young man who pretended with success to be a nitwit were always active in Mr. RICHARD DARK'S "whimsically humorous story of love and adventure," *Dibchick* (MORAY PRESS, 7/6). *Mr. Dibchick's* love-affairs did not lack complications, but his adventures in other directions were a full-time job because he was mistaken for the President of a South American state, on whom a number of remarkably tough people had evil designs. A situation in which a poultry-farmer finds himself, almost willy-nilly, posing in a country house as an important President is one that needs restrained treatment if complete absurdity is to be avoided, and for the most part Mr. DARK has been alive to the dangers which lurked around him. Once or twice *Dibchick* too obviously sought and found trouble, but granted a taste for fantastic stories, he and his boy-scouting bodyguard will be found to give an entertaining performance.

Britain's Record Backslider.

"With a friend he left England in 1896 and returned home 774 days later, having visited seventeen countries and travelled more than nineteen thousand miles on his seat."—*Account of Cycling Tour.*

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Charivaria

A WAITER has announced that he will attempt to swim the Channel this year. It has of course never yet been swum palms upwards.

* * *

"SLIPS AT A CORONATION."
Film Notes Headline.

Red, white and blue slips, naturally.

* * *

A recently appointed Committee to inquire into the methods employed by share-pushers is working under the chairmanship of Sir ARCHIBALD BODKIN, we read. It is believed that he has a keen eye for embroidery.

* * *

Italian prisoners interviewed by four British women M.P.'s recently said they didn't know why they were in Spain. That is of course where they differed from the four British women M.P.'s.

* * *



Now that London's statues have all been boarded up to keep them from damage during the Coronation, it is hoped that some of the more prominent members of London clubs are going to be similarly protected.

* * *

In America a man has been granted a divorce owing to the interest his wife took in crossword-puzzles. It is not disclosed who was given the custody of the dictionary.

* * *

One of the problems confronting early civilisation, we are told, was what to use for money. We'd rather like to know the solution ourselves.

* * *

Ten thousand words were used by a man who made his will the other day. It sounds as if he is leaving nothing at all to chance.

* * *

A reader complains that he doesn't know what to make of his spring greens, which have all turned brown. Why not cigars?





A collector of waste-paper in the London parks says that he is not too busy at the moment but he expects things to pick up after the Coronation.

* * *

"The bride, given away by her father, was being held in place by a wreath of orange blossom."
South of England Paper.

It takes more than that to hold the bridegroom together.

* * *

Scientists appear to be in agreement that the end of the world is still a long way off. At any rate no queue has started to form for it yet.

* * *

"During the past few years most musicians have had their ups and downs," declares a band-leader. With the exception of trombone-players, who have had their ins and outs.



* * *

"Why do people climb high mountains?" asks a correspondent. To get away from the people who ask silly questions.

* * *

A man who stole some postal-orders from a London post-office is described as being very short. The Police theory is that that's why he stole the postal-orders.

* * *

In a recent law case Mr. Justice A. FOREST of Montreal ruled that cows have as much right in the road as the motor-car. This confirms what cows seem to have known all along.

* * *

"A gas chamber has been erected at the rear of the Town Hall, Reigate, and every volunteer for the various services will have an opportunity of passing through this chamber, following upon which they will be fitted with gas masks, and such fitting will be recorded."—*Surrey Paper.*

For the inquest?

* * *

The good golfer is never really dismayed, we are told. All the same it's sometimes a help on the green to get that sinking feeling.

Dedication

THE magic of the ancient rite,
The sceptre and the sword,
Homage and fealty in fight
From lord to over-lord,
These—and the blossom-sprinkled land,
The dark pits frowning
And the seas of the world from strand to strand—
These at your service stand,
These you have for your crowning,
GEORGE, King of England.

The good that out of storm and sun
Is grown by grace of years,
The freedom that may not be won
With force and not with fears—
These, when you stand alone,
When the shout of the people, drowning
Trumpet and drum, have sent you on
To the Abbey's storied stone,
These to be learnt and known,
These you have for your crowning,
GEORGE, King of England.

Aid to Current Conversation

Health

"How is your poor uncle?"

"Thank you, he thinks he may be better in time for the Coronation."

"Will he be going to London for it?"

"No, there has never been any question of that. The doctor says that any exertion would be fatal on the spot. But he hopes to be better in good time for it."

"Naturally. Well, I do hope he will be."

Shopping

"I want some soap, please."

"Certainly, Madam. We have a new Guest-Room Tablet in red, white and blue, stamped with the date of the Coronation."

"Ah, yes. But I meant kitchen soap. For scrubbing."

"In that case let me recommend a new and very special brand of soap, Madam. It is to be known as Coronation Soap."

"Has it any special property?"

"Well, Madam, we may confidently say that it will *lather* very well—besides being a nice reminder of the Coronation, of course."

Social Amenities

"And shall you have people staying with you in your flat?"

"Yes, it's wonderful what you can do with three rooms. Four people in each of the bedrooms, and the five children on the two sofas, and we think that we ourselves can fit into the kitchen all right if we can get leave to move the refrigerator on to the stairs."

"It ought to be splendid."

"Oh, yes, we're delighted about it."

"How are you going to get up to London from Land's End?"

"Oh, it'll be quite easy, I expect. My husband and the boys will go by car, starting frightfully early in the morning, and they'll leave the car at some place outside London and then somehow fight their way up to the hotel. It's only just beyond the Marble Arch. And the girls and I are going to send their trunks off by train, because they all go back to school the day after; so I daresay Waterloo and Paddington and King's Cross may be rather crowded and difficult. But we shall do it *somehow*, even if we have to carry the trunks between us."

"You've heard about the poor dear Buttertons, I suppose?"

"No. What's happened? I thought they were all going to the Coronation?"

"So they are. They're going to see it from the street somewhere. They think they can manage if they have a camp-stool for the grandmother, and two sticks for the delicate sister to lean on, and take it in turns to carry the baby."

"Oh, but that's lovely! I thought you meant they weren't able to go at all."

"Oh, no, no. Nothing like as bad as that."

The Voice of Rumour

"They're only to be allowed eighteen inches to sit upon, I hear."

"Dear me, that'll be rather a squeeze for some of them, won't it? And how *are* they going to get at their coronets?"

"Oh, they'll manage somehow. Of course they'll have to be in their robes and feathers and things terribly early—*and* in their places too. I believe some of them are putting up their hairdressers overnight, on sofas in the dining-room, so as to get fixed up first thing in the morning."

"What a very sound idea!"

"Yes, isn't it brilliant?"

"They say the thing to do is to take a *huge* house, simply regardless, and get everybody you can think of to come and stay, and you get your money back over and over again. People don't care *what* they pay. It doesn't in the least matter if it's on the route or not—though naturally if it is on the route you can get practically anything you ask for."

"My dear, I heard of a woman who hadn't the *ghost* of an idea of letting her flat or anything, and an agency simply rang her up and offered her *five thousand pounds* for the week."

"Really? And did she take it?"

The Voice of Reason

". . . and all I can say is, that if we're going to have trouble over the sausage-rolls same as we did for the Jubilee, then I'd rather resign from the Tea Committee at once."

"Oh, Mrs. Tray! Don't say a thing like that, dear. Why, if you're going to start resigning it'll simply end in there being *no Coronation at all.*"

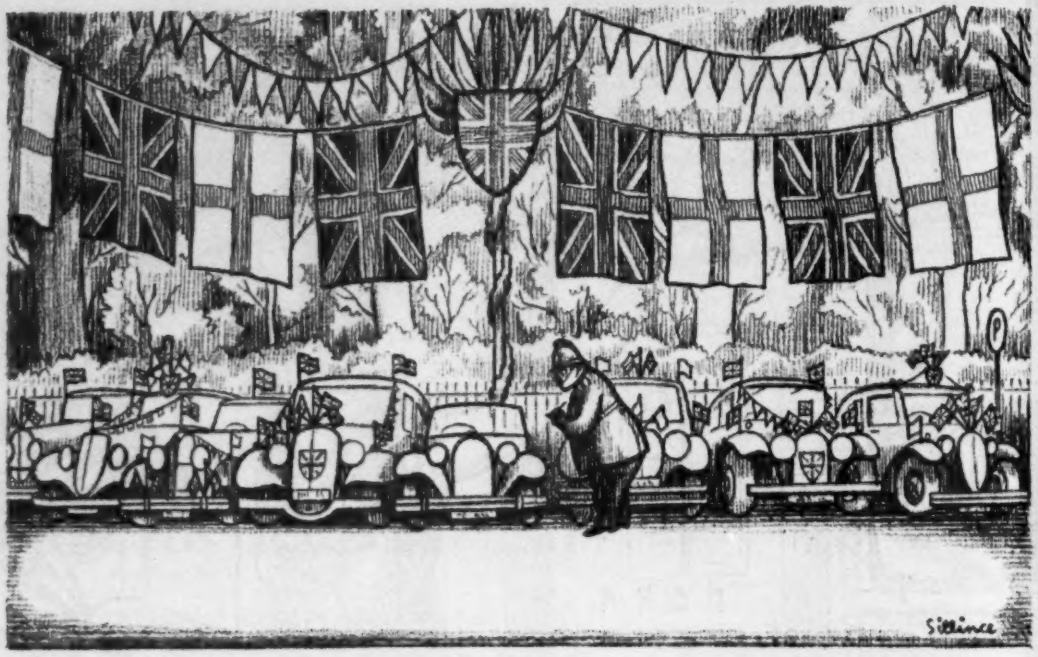
E. M. D.

Harry Plunket Greene

IT is proposed as a memorial to the late HARRY PLUNKET GREENE to endow a private ward for musicians in St. George's Hospital. In the belief that there must be many friends and admirers of this fine artist and gentleman who would like to help in commemorating his name in a way he would assuredly have approved, the Memorial Fund Committee asks that subscriptions be sent to the Treasurer, Sir IAN MALCOLM, 16, John Street, Bedford Row, W.C.1.



MAY MORNING, OR DORA'S DAY IN



TREASON

Flutter

I BOUGHT a little bunch of shares;
Into the sky,
High, high above the price that I
Had paid for them I saw them fly.
Up, up they soared in steady rhythmic flight,
To my delight;
Poised gracefully, they hovered there awhile;
I watched them with a fond parental smile,
Waiting the time
When they should even further climb.

There came a day at last
When all the economic sky was overcast;
My shares just folded up their golden wings,
Poor silly things,
And nose-dived, falling, falling
To earth. It was appalling.

I have them yet, looking, I fear in vain,
For that bright day when they shall soar again.
I will not sell them. Anyhow
Nobody wants them now.

A. W. B.

Podgy and the Coronation

I HAD just finished breakfast when the door burst open and young Podgy McSumph entered the room at speed and, without taking any notice of my presence, went careering round the table.

"What's the meaning of this?" I demanded, catching hold of him as he was dashing past me on his second lap.

"I've started practisin' for the Coronation noo," panted Podgy.

"The Coronation?" I exclaimed.

"Ay," said Podgy. "I'm to get goin' to the Coronation."

"Are you? Who's taking you?"

"Naebody's takin' me; I'm goin' maself."

"But the Coronation's to be away in London, Podgy."

"It is not," retorted Podgy. "It's to be in the High Park, an' I'm to be runnin' at it for wee boys under six."

"Oh, I see. But of course the real Coronation will be in London, Podgy, where the KING and QUEEN will be crowned."

Podgy gaped at me. "An' is the KING no' comin' here to see me runnin'?"

"I don't think he would have time for that."

Podgy looked distressed. "Weel, if that's no rotten!" he ejaculated. "An' maybe I'll no' be able to run as quick noo."

"Why not?"

"Because auld Davie Stodge said if the KING was here he would maybe cry to me, 'Weel done, Podgy McSumph!' an' then I would run quicker an' quicker."

"Well, you'll just have to try to imagine that the KING is looking on and run as fast as you can."

"Maybe," suggested Podgy thoughtfully—"maybe I could keep sayin', 'Weel done, Podgy McSumph!' in to maself. But"—a bright idea striking him—"could the KING no' come here an' see me runnin' after he's got his croon on?"

"But the KING and QUEEN will be going to get crowned then, and——"

"Will it be aboot eleeven o'clock?" eyeing me sharply.

"Round about that time."

"Ay," disgustedly, "an' that's aboot the time I'll be bashin' roond the High Park fora' I'm worth," clearly of opinion that things were badly mismanaged.

"But the KING and QUEEN will be busy all day in London, Podgy."

"London!" snorted Podgy, with a look of scorn that would have made a sensitive Cockney shiver. "Whit's London?"

"First of all," I went on, ignoring the interruption, "the KING and QUEEN will go with a great procession to Westminster Abbey. The bells will be ringing and the flags flying."

"It's a whistle we're goin' to have at oor Coronation. Parlie Doops is to blow it for us to get ready. An' then Pug Roonie's to wave a flag for us to start runnin'."

"I see. Well, then, Podgy, the KING and QUEEN will arrive at Westminster Abbey. The soldiers will all be lined up to receive them. They will pass into the Abbey and——"

"Will it be dinner-time then?"

"Perhaps it will be very nearly dinner-time."

"Weel, that's the time I'll be havin' ma second bath."

"Are you having two baths at the Coronation?"

"Ay," boastfully. "I'm havin' a big bath in the mornin'. An' then after the runnin' I'm havin' a wee bath for ma legs. An' then I'm gettin' on ma good kilt for the dinner."

"Are you having a special dinner?"

"It's to be in the kirk hall," nodding his head at me solemnly. "An' we're gettin' hot pies an' paper pokes wi' cakes in them. An' we're to get cups wi' the KING an' QUEEN's photy on them to keep."

"That will be splendid, Podgy. Well, then, as I was telling you, the KING and QUEEN will be in the Abbey. The great organ will play, and——"

"Sergeant McIntyre's to blow his bugle at oor dinner for us to start to the hot pies."

"Yes, but I was wanting to tell you about the Coronation in London. As I explained to you, the KING and QUEEN will be in the Abbey."

"Weel, if they was at oor Coronation they would be gettin' their dinners in the kirk hall wi' hot pies."

"Yes, but you see, Podgy, the——"

"An' there'll be far mair fun at oor Coronation. Because there's to be games, an' I'm to recite 'The Apple.'"

"Well, I am sure the KING and QUEEN would like to come and see you running and hear you reciting. But, as I told you, they'll be busy all day in London, and they'll have no time. I'm sure you can understand that."

"Ay," sighed Podgy, his sympathy aroused. "An' they'll be tired, the poor wee KING and QUEEN. An' I'll be tired as weel," he added.

"Yes, Podgy, it will be a long day but a happy day for everybody. We shall have so many things to do."

"Ay," said Podgy, gazing meditatively at the tablecloth; "me an' the KING an' QUEEN 's goin' to be terrible busy at the Coronation." D.

H.M.O.W.

(His Majesty's Office of Works.)

IN the days of my innocent childhood,
When fancy burned brighter than now,
Day by day there would smite on my wondering sight
The mysterious cipher H. MOW.

As each morning in Kensington Gardens
I played 'neath the leaf-laden bough,
An enigma remained unresolved, unexplained—
The ubiquitous legend H. MOW.

With persistence that passed comprehension
Officialdom seemed to endow
By some mystical rule every chattel and tool
With the cryptic impression H. MOW.

What did H. represent? Was it Henry,
Hugh, Harold or Herbert? And how
Ought the surname to go? Should one rhyme it with "Joe"
Or presume it to tally with "cow"?

Since the Parks were admittedly Royal,
What deplorable taste to allow
Every tumbril and sand-cart and gardener's handcart
To bear the inscription H. MOW!

Or suppose the illustrious owner
His status declined to avow,
What presumption had those who saw fit to impose
On their liege-lord a name like H. MOW!

You observe, I was slow in the uptake;
The years which saw youth at the prow
Had amounted to nine ere I came to divine
My mistake in regard to H. MOW.

But to-day, though I'm older, and greyer
The locks which encircle my brow,
I still correlate one Department of State
With the ludicrous title H. MOW.



From the Ish Anthology

III.

AFTER THE FACT

"WAIT," said the aged man,
"Until you're bankrupt.
If you must work yourself to death,
Doing so to pay off a debt
Is considered, for some reason,
Far more laudable than
Doing so to avoid having to borrow."

THEY NEVER VARY

The gourmet accustomed to say,
"The *sole meunière* here
Is first-rate,"

Was disconcerted
When someone pointed out
That this remark implied
Standardisation.

HEAR, HEAR

The Ish traveller said he agreed
With the English proverb,
Too many cooks spoil the broth.

"I agree," he repeated;
"Far, far too many."

NO DISCRIMINATION

"That night, the presses roared. . . ."

It is always a great comfort
To the newspaper-man
With a proper sense
Of the tremendous drama of his calling,

That presses
Happen to roar.

But,
Come to think of it,
They *always* roar;

Whether the great black headlines
Staring at last
From the stacked papers
Announce an assassination,
A war,

Or the ability
Of a pet goldfish
To recite PLATO.

TO AND FRO

". . . Then," the political observer ended,
"Hexagonia will march!"

Asked "Where to?" he replied, "Don't quibble.
There is nothing more significant
Than marching.
In some European countries
The entire policy
Consists of nothing else."

SOUNDS SO MUCH NICER

It was the estimable "Callisthenes"
Who wrote, a few weeks ago:

"When the ultimate day
Of surrendering one's control
Comes to its dawning . . ."

So far as I could make out
He was delicately implying
Death.
Did I say delicately? Wow!

A NASTY ONE

"I won't come with you,"
Said the maiden rudely,
"In *that* car.
We should look like
Overgrown twins
In a runaway pram."

MOTIVES

Because the sun shone into his eyes
X edged away,
Anxious to end the conversation

Which Y wished to continue,
Because he liked to feel the sun
On the back of his neck.

RELATIVITY

For the politically serious man
Humour on the other side
Can only be unintentional.

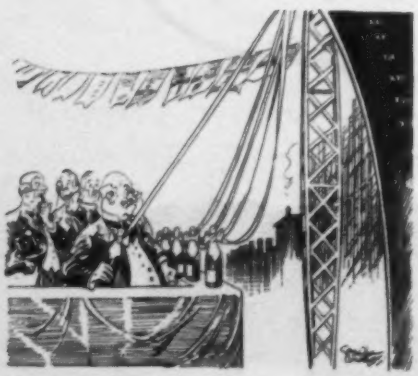
APHORISM, EACH WAY

First childhood is not caring
That others can hear you
Talking to yourself.
Second childhood is not knowing.

Or perhaps
The other way round.

STOP ME——

"Business is at a standstill,"
Said the ice-cream-tricycle man
With great satisfaction. R. M.



"HE USUALLY MISSES WITH THE FIRST ONE OR TWO."

At the R.A.

LONDONER. See! Here is Burlington House. Let us enter.

Coronation Visitor. Lead on. I cannot resist you. Already I have entered the Tower of London, the Zoo, the Victoria and Albert Museum, St. Paul's Cathedral and thirty-eight public-houses frequented by Doctor JOHNSON. My mind is in a receptive state. But first tell me, what do we expect to see inside this impressive but somewhat gloomy building?

Londoner. A kaleidoscope of English life presented by over a thousand artists. Beautiful scenery, glamorous women, colour, light——

Visitor (*showing signs of alarm*). I do not care for musical comedy in the middle of the afternoon. Take me to the Albert Memorial.

Londoner. You misunderstand me. This is the one-hundred-and-sixty-ninth (or Coronation) Exhibition of the Royal Academy of Arts, founded in 1768, from which you will readily judge that the Exhibitions are of an annual nature or, as some would say, take place yearly. One shilling-and-sixpence per person is the price of admission, but in view of the special circumstances of your visit I will pay for both.

Visitor. The hospitality of the English people is proverbial. I will buy the catalogue.

Londoner. Good. We shall then be in the best possible position to appreciate the treasures in store for us. Now here, Number 19, is a portrait by Sir WILLIAM LLEWELLYN, and over there is a landscape from the same firm hand. What an interesting contrast! I am all for versatility in an artist. It distresses me to see the way in which some painters waste their obvious gifts in portraying the same face or the same tree year after year. Possibly a picture of a wheelbarrow has one year aroused considerable interest; as likely as not its artist will paint nothing but wheelbarrows for the next decade. You have seen something of the sort yourself, no doubt?

Visitor. I had a friend who used to send in a picture of an orange painted from a different angle every year. It took him thirty-six years to get round again to the angle he started from, but of course the orange was very much smaller then than it had been originally.

Londoner. What did he do then?

Visitor. He cut it in half and started again.

Londoner. That at least one could hardly do with a wheelbarrow. However, we are drifting from the subject of versatility. Look at Sir JOHN LAVERY'S "Chamber Music at Wimborne House." Later on——

Visitor. Who is the gentleman with the drooping moustaches?

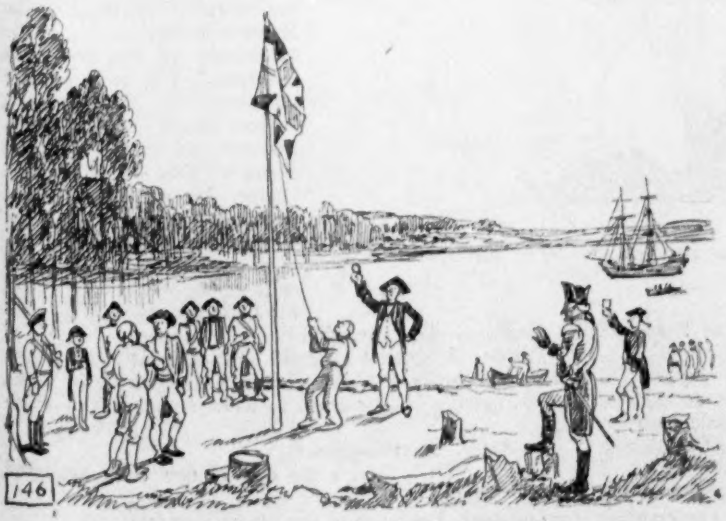
Londoner (*loudly*). Later on you will see "Sunbathers," a colourful open-air study, and two essays in portraiture by the same artist.

Visitor. "Essays in Portraiture" is good. You ought to write for the papers. Look, there's Aphrodite, still rising from the foam. She's always at it, that girl—only this time the air seems to be thick with roses. It's a funny thing, but those roses remind me of the wallpaper in the back-bedroom at my aunt's little place. Of course there wasn't any Aphrodite on it, mind you. My aunt's a dear good creature, but she wouldn't stand for anything of that kind, not in the back-bedroom. Peacocks, perhaps, and a pagoda or two, but nothing that you could properly take exception to. "The classics," she used to say, "I bar;" and you can't wonder at it, can you? Her grandfather was a canon, you know.

Londoner. You interest me a great deal. But I really think we ought to be getting on. There are fifteen hundred and eighty-two exhibits here, not counting the special portraits of royal patrons of the Academy.

Visitor. In that case you had better just tell me what pictures are being talked about this year and I will make a note of them. We have still to see the Albert Memorial.

Londoner. Well, there is Mr. ALGERNON TALMAGE'S "Founding of Australia" and Dame LAURA KNIGHT'S "London Palladium." There are Mr. EVE'S portrait of



"WELL, WHAT IF IT IS UPSIDE-DOWN? REMEMBER WE ARE IN THE ANTIPODES."



STRIP JUGGLING



HERE'S ADAM—



BUT WHERE'S EVE?

Mr. MAX BEERBOHM, Mr. KEITH HENDERSON'S "The Good Work," Mr. GLYN PHILPOT'S "Melancholy Negro," Mr. RUSSELL FLINT'S "Toil at Dawn" and Mr. GERALD BROCKHURST'S "Miss Merle Oberon." Nor must you miss "The Farmer's Daughter," by Mr. FLEETWOOD-WALKER, "Brother Petch" and "The Bag," by Mr. GEORGE BELCHER, "Sacred and Profane Love," by Mr. JOHN KEATING, or "Decoration for a Garden Room," by Mrs. WHEATLEY. Then there's "Cornish Goatherd," "The Golden Age," "A Game of Patience," "The Roundabout," "The Commissary Governor of Warsaw," "Fares, Please!" "Greta Garbo——"

Visitor. All right, all right, all *right*. Which is the nearest?

Londoner. Dame LAURA KNIGHT'S massive theatrical canvas is just here in Gallery IV. Note the careful detail.

Visitor. I wouldn't hang that on my walls if you went down on your bended knees and asked me.

Londoner (*shocked*). My dear Sir! Well over a thousand pounds has already been paid for that picture. What are you thinking about?

Visitor. I am thinking about the size of my walls, among other things. What is this?



CHANNEL SWIMMER ARRIVES IN TIME FOR THE CORONATION.

Londoner. That is "Chelsea *v.* Arsenal at Stamford Bridge." Now here——

Visitor. Chelsea *v.* Arsenal, eh? Who's winning?

Londoner. It is not the function of the artist to indicate the state of the score. Now here is a charming little study——

Visitor. Listen, brother. You've got a way of chattering that plays old Harry with my concentration. Now I suggest you stay here by this pompous old perisher—My good Sir, I was referring to this portrait, not to you—while I run round the rest of the Exhibition. (Your own portrait, is it? Well, I must say it's a wonderful likeness.) Cross-grained fellow that; there seemed to be no pleasing him. Meet me under the statue of TURNER in half-an-hour.

Londoner (*half-an-hour later*). Well, have you enjoyed yourself?

Visitor. I have indeed. I've seen "Poetry," which I liked, and a rather striking portrait of Miss CICELY HAMILTON and hundreds of Mr. ELWELL'S pigs. I've seen three bishops at least and "Roofs in High Holborn" and Venus again (without her shell, which gave me quite a turn), and a lovely thing called "Summer Evening," by Mr. ALGERNON NEWTON. And a lot more besides.

Londoner. What did you like best?

Visitor. Well, if you gave me my choice of anything in the Exhibition (and, as I say, the hospitality of the English is notorious), I'd have another landscape by Mr. NEWTON, "River Scene," because it's so tranquil and so full of light. There's a tiny sketch for it in Gallery II. which you might throw in as well. After that I shouldn't mind having No. 351, because it's so gay and delicate and would look well in my sitting-room.

Londoner. And after that?

Visitor. After that I should like this bust of the Right Reverend the Lord Abbot of BUCKFAST, because he seems to me (saving his presence) to have a pleasantly roguish look.

Londoner. Anything else?

Visitor. Well, there's the case of new coins exhibited by the Mint——

Londoner. Let us go to the Albert Memorial.

H. F. E.



THE HOUSE ROCKED WITH LAUGHTER.



"IF I'D ONLY GOT 496 MORE, I COULD HAVE MADE A WAISTCOAT."



WOMAN'S CROWNING GLORY.



SPEEDING UP LAMB-FATTENING IN SCOTLAND.



CAREFUL MOTHER CHLOROFORMS HER CHILD BEFORE GOING TO SEE AN "A" FILM.



MUSCULAR DEVELOPMENT OF THE NECK INDUCED BY THE CONTINUAL ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF APPLAUSE.

Dorcas and the Birds

I WAS writing a few weeks ago about Dorcas: how the place was overrun by mice, and how, in order to keep these pests down, a little black cat was added to the household; but, at the same time, how I regretted the necessity, because cats frighten birds away and I like birds more than cats.

Well, it has fallen out exactly as I foresaw. The mice have gone but the birds have gone too. Dorcas remains. And I am quite sure that she will remain, because she has made the cottage and the garden her own. What she does with her life, no one knows; she is and she is not. No one knows where she sleeps at night; but there are days when, in one chair or another, or even on beds accessible through open windows, she never uncurls. No matter how long are her absences or her invisibilities, she arrives for breakfast and supper; but for such occasions only can she be depended upon. Once, in her dainty leisurely way, she has satisfied her hunger and thirst, she has need for civilisation no more and becomes the typical nomadic wild beast.

When, capriciously, she is in one of her domestic moods, she invites attention: she impedes walking by her desire to caress, or be caressed by, legs; she butts her head with the suggestion that it must be rubbed, particularly behind the ears; she proffers her long waving tail with the assurance that it will be pulled. "What a friendly cat!" strangers remark; "she really likes companionship!" And a minute later she has mysteriously melted away, and perhaps will not be seen again till the day after to-morrow.

Her returns to the house are as unaccountable as her vanishings. She may not have been seen for hours, and will then rejoin the place by leaping suddenly and inaudibly on my shoulder as I sit reading or writing; yet, although manifesting herself in what might be an alarming manner, not alarming at all, since the act is accompanied by gentleness and suavity.

But what I am troubled about is the birds. There is, for example, a nesting-box in the apple-tree on the lawn, in which, during three or four springs and early summers, families have been brought up. A week or so ago I noticed a pair of birds flitting in and out of it and was delighted to think of their courage, especially as this is one of Dorcas's favourite climbing-grounds; for, when in the garden, she is addicted to fences and boughs, and nothing is too high for her to reach. It was therefore with much satisfaction that I realised that the birds either had decided that Dorcas would not be able to negotiate the hole or had come to terms with her—as I have always thought that animals could and should do. At any rate Dorcas's hostility to the dog here and his hostility to her, very shortly turned to friendship.

But I was wrong. Something like this must have happened. "I don't feel so happy as I did" (the father bird is speaking) "about this box."

"But why not?" replies the hen-bird.

"I don't like the look of that little black cat."

"You should have said so before. Why do you wait until we have done so much on the nest?"

"I'm sorry about that; but I don't like the look of that little black cat."

"We did very well last year. Two broods, and, if I may say so, both adequately fledged. I haven't seen too much of them since, I'll admit, but I understand they're all alive to-day."

"Yes, dear, you have been splendid. Splendid. But last year there was no cat; at any rate no residential cat. Why the fellow here wanted to import a cat, I can't imagine. But the fact is that he did. And, apparently, he approves of it. I've seen him fondling her."

"So then what?"

"Then I'm afraid we must abandon this comfortable box and try somewhere else. It's a bore, I know, and incidentally it means much more work for me too. But there it is. Cats are cats."

"If you insist, of course we must. But it'll puzzle you to find any spot that is out of reach of Dorcas."

"I'm afraid that's true. But, at any rate, if we move she'll have to hunt. This nesting-box is rather asking for it, isn't it? Even if she couldn't actually get inside, she'd nab one of us at the opening, as likely as not, and then what about the brood?"

"Did you say brood?"

"Yes."

"That settles it. We must quit."

And that, I am convinced, is why I shall see no longer, from my window, little birds gaily flitting about the apple-tree: at first, both bearing moss, and later one bearing food.

I am not sure that, since the mice have been killed or scared from the premises, I would not give Dorcas away, if I could feel the least confidence that she would stay where she was sent. But I have the feeling that she would always come back. I have the feeling that if this place were to have a new name it would have to be called "Dorcas's." E. V. L.



"I'M SORRY, MISS HESLOP, BUT YOUR BOTANY HOUR ALWAYS SEEMS TO SAP MY VITALITY."

Secretary Wanted

NEAT. Quick. Punctual. Good complexion, own or other. Hair natural. Accent ditto. Fair knowledge grammar and spelling. Sense of humour (mainly employer's). Able to do own typewriting repairs. Voice sweet and low. Capable devotion to duty. Willing to use British Museum reading-room. Grandparents deceased. Able to learn from employer. Physically incapable tears. Resilient under strain. Immune from colds. Father in work. Salary: small allowance, lunches, fares, etc., during month's trial. Thereafter by arrangement.



THE BRITISH CHARACTER

PASSION FOR NOT FORGETTING THE MODERATELY GREAT

Dental Duck

IT is a pretty device that an imaginative American dentist has lately got hold of. His idea is, when operating on the young, to project Mickey Mouse films on the ceiling immediately above the torture-chair. The juvenile mind, becoming enthralled, will, it is hoped, forget his sorrow and remember his misery no more. We are told that the scheme has been tried with gratifying results.

This no doubt is all very well for the youthful patient, who has nothing to lose either way. If it has an anæsthetic effect, good; if not, he can shut his eyes. But where does the parent or guardian come in? This sort of thing is not done for nothing. Mouse is a highly-paid artist, and I don't see the dentist engaging him and his company out of his own pocket. What would happen would be that it was cocked on to the bill. And it may be justly objected that, as these films can be seen for sixpence in the most favourable conditions, a private engagement for a ten-year-old brat in a chair is shoving the thing too far. Putting that aside, why only the young? Does not the adult suffer? Is it not he that is the true devotee of Mouse? If I had a son, I'd see him to glory before he had a Mickey film at the dentist's and I didn't. I go further. It is the grown-up who is affected by modern strain. Children are too much pampered. If there's any alleviation going, it's for us. A modicum of pain would harden the little beasts and do them good.

One point more. What of Mouse? The young mind, being quite illogical, might grow to connect him with the dentist (or suffering) and, where now there is love, a Great Loathing might be set up. This might queer the Mickey pitch, and, as film popularity is notoriously a tricky affair, even turn him and his colleagues clean out of business. Here I should welcome the views of that strong individualist, Donald Duck. He is an actor, if ever there was one, who bathes himself in the sunshine of popular favour. You can see him doing it. Unless I'm wrong, any action that might imperil that favour would be met by him with an envenomed outburst of quackering indignation that it would warm the heart to listen to. Let us have the views of that irascible artist on this proposal.

DUM-DUM.

League of Guides

SIR EDWARD LUTYENS, in *The Sunday Times*, has made a charming and practical suggestion for the entertainment of our visitors from overseas during the approaching period of fun and jollity—to wit:—

"that at every cathedral, church, historical monument and beauty-spot the services of professional guides be supplemented by enthusiastic and knowledgeable citizens. It would be their duty to watch for unaccompanied visitors"—(making it clear that they are not confidence-men)—*"and to give them the best of their knowledge."*

A fine notion, though the details need some careful consideration. Anyone who has visited the British Dominions or the United States of America will remember how generously the citizens bestow their time and knowledge on the guest. They seem to have nothing in the world to do but entertain him, drive him about, take him to the races or show him the museum. But when they come to us I have a guilty feeling that we are all pretty full of work and business and have no time to do more than hand them an occasional cocktail.

It will be fun too to stand about in the Timber Area at Westminster and watch for the unaccompanied Australian and say:—

"No, Digger, this is not a timber-yard, nor is it part of the Surrey Commercial Docks, nor the beginning of an afforestation scheme. It is Parliament Square. It is the heart of the Empire, a verdant open space with trees and grass and the statues of famous men. You cannot see the trees for the wood? Well, let me show you round.

"No, I do not want your watch. Nor do I seek to sell you oil-shares. There is the statue of our great DISRAELI with a loud-speaker under each arm. And that is Westminster Abbey, Digger, where HIS MAJESTY will be *inthronized*—yes, believe it or not, that is one of the words in the Coronation Service. You cannot see the Abbey? Well, stand on tip-toe—you are tall—look over that large shed, and between the fourth and fifth iron girders from the left you will get a glimpse of the Abbey. Some years you can see the whole building. You must come again.

"Behind you, now, are the Houses of Parliament. Behind you is a hoarding, you say? And a lot more wood! Don't be pedantic, Digger. I assure you that the Houses of Parliament are there. Look up, now. You can just see the upper part of the clock-face of Big Ben. On a clear day in a normal year you can see the whole of the tower from here.

"What would you like to see now? In the Park yonder we have some delicious flowers. But this year we have had them roofed over. We have put them under wood. But let us walk along and I will show you where the daffodils used to be.

"There, now! That used to be the statue of Captain COOK, who discovered your little island—did he not? You will find it difficult to discover Captain COOK, for most of him is swathed in timber. However, he is there. That is the top of his head."

We are a little vague, you see, about what Captain COOK did; and that, we think, is right. These amateur guides must not be too "knowledgeable." It is the great defect of the professional guide that he knows too much and insists on telling it all. The guide who makes you look at *all* the statues and *all* the tombs and relates the history of everything has driven many a good man to the dog-races. It was a professional guide who nearly kept me out of TUTANKHAMEN'S Tomb. Our League of Guides should be able to answer a question or two, if challenged, but, on the whole, should let the visitor crawl about the cathedral on his own and enjoy himself. And if he gets the Gothic and the Early English mixed does it really matter? The ancient universities and public schools, I think, should organize a few LUTYENS Leaguers. It would be pleasant for the Australian to find himself accosted by a genial housemaster who led him on to the playing-fields of Eton and explained about "Pop" and so forth. But when the official guide at such places gets going on the Founder or the woodwork in the chantry it is really too much for most of us.

I like a guide who takes you into the cathedral and says, "Well, there you are," and lets you have a look, and when you say, "What century was this?" replies, "I really forget." Then he says, "There's just *one* tomb (or picture, or fresco, or statue) you ought to see," and when you've done that he lets you off the whole of the rest of the cathedral.

The professional lets you off nothing. And he seldom knows the really amusing corners. At the House of Commons, at the bottom of the Committee stair-



"WELL, *I* THINK SOMEONE OUGHT TO TELL MUSSOLINI ABOUT IT."

case, there is a very large statue of Sir CHARLES BARRY, sitting grandly like a Roman Emperor, far more than life-size. He was the architect of the present Palace of Westminster. On one side of him is a small head of PEEL, Prime Minister. On the other side is a small head of PALMERSTON, Prime Minister. If you did not read the labels you might think that they were acolytes or private secretaries, attending the great man. Now, I like this corner because it exhibits in their just proportions the Artist and the Statesman, and I know no other corner of England where this can be seen. But I am sure that no official guide has ever made the point.

Down below, in a passage, are a charming series of paintings and prints depicting the burning of the Houses of Parliament in 1834. Some of them look like an early film-poster, others are restrained; but all the pictures are impressive and the wind is blowing in all directions. You can see too in a glass case some of the tax "tallies" (or wooden receipts) which caused that important conflagration. These, having accumulated beyond sense and convenience in the Victoria Tower, were consigned by order to the furnace: but the British workman overdid it and set light to the House of Lords. (I may have got some of this story wrong, but that is half the fun of an unofficial guide.)

Now, there are two good points here. One is that Parliament was burned to the ground because of excessive taxation; and how right that was! I hope that the National Enterprise Retribution receipts will not be stored in the same place. The other point is this. Year after year, on November 5, the youth of this country foolishly celebrate the day on which the Houses of Parliament were *not* destroyed. Or rather, they celebrate the miscreant who failed to destroy them; for education has now advanced so far that nearly all the small boys who demand "a penny for the Guy" regard the late FAWKES as a national hero. But October 16, 1834, the day on which the Houses of Parliament were well and truly laid low, passes unnoticed by the nation, even by the most destructive boys; and the name of the honest toiler who heaped too many tallies on the furnace is quite unknown. Is this not odd?

Then, at one of our great public schools, I remember a memorial archway which commemorates the deeds and death of a certain General. The visitor (and the new boy) reverently regards this arch and thinks how great a school it is that slowly formed so fine a character. But if you look in the records you will find that the said General had to leave the school after two years because he was not clever enough.

This is the kind of jolly embroidery which the LUTYENS Leaguer would add to the official recitation about great men and Gothic. I see now that that indefatigable reformer, Mr. CLOUGH WILLIAMS-ELLIS, was really first in the field. But he recommended not human guides but printed "information-sheets" concerning the local lore of all good places. For these, he says, will endure, but the amateur guides will pass away. True; but the printed sheets will have most of the defects of the official guide: they will say too much, they will leave nothing out—*except* the funny bits, the scandals and the spicy comment. Imagine, for example, the difference between an "information-sheet" concerning Somerset House and the things that you or I would say about the place. Onward the League!

A. P. H.



"MY 'USBAND'S LIKE THAT TOO. 'E MUST ALWAYS 'AVE THE LAST WORD BUT ONE."



THE CULTURED CRUISERS

"HURRY UP WITH THE PHOTOGRAPH, DEAR. I WANT TO DISMOUNT AND CATCH UP THE OTHERS."

Plus ça Change

"DID you have a nice trip abroad, Mr. Jenkins?"
"Oh, just swell!
You should have seen the omelettes they gave us
At the Grand Hotel;
And the way they did fish—
I only wish
I could get it like that here;
Oh, they know what 's what on the Continent—no fear!"

"Did you enjoy Egypt, Miss Weatherby?"
"It was grand;
They had a *heavenly* floor at the Palace
And the most di-*vine* band;
I danced every night—
Honour bright!—
Except of course when we'd bridge.
Egypt! I think to have seen it's a privilege."

"Have a good time in Italy, Colonel?"
"Oh, top-hole!
They've improved the golf there amazin'ly,
Upon my soul!
We'd some quite decent tennis
At Venice,
And the rackets they gave us at Rome—
Damme! I don't think I ever had better at home."

"Well, John, and how was Switzerland?"
"O.K.
There were a lot of other fellows from my House
Putting in a stay.
We'd some marvellous rags.
The only snags
Were the foreign blighters one met.
But would I go to Switzerland next hols? You bet!"

En pays étrange,
Plus ça change
Plus même chose;
That, I suppose,
Is why everyone one knows
Goes.

H. B.



THE IMPERIAL VISITOR

YEOMAN JOHN BULL. "AND YOU, SIR?"

FATHER NEPTUNE. "I COME FROM THE SEVEN SEAS WITH LOYAL GREETINGS TO KING GEORGE."



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Impressions of Parliament

Friday, April 30th.—Mr. A. P. HERBERT made an indignant protest this afternoon when the Labour Party spun out the Third Reading debate on the Road Traffic Bill with the intention of blocking the next Bill on the list, called, somewhat cumbrously, the Shops (Sunday Trading Restriction) Act (1936) Amendment Bill. Their obstructive tactics ruined whatever slight chance there was of the Marriage Bill, sponsored by Mr. HERBERT, getting its Third Reading. This was the last Friday set aside for Private Members' Bills during the present Session.

It was indeed a queer day's work, and Mr. HERBERT told the House so in his own forcible manner. He was full of hot feelings about democracy, he said, and apart altogether from the Marriage Bill he wished to say, with great humility, that he regarded the day's proceedings as disgraceful. The story which would go out about them would be discreditable not only to the House but to Members opposite; and he wondered if any Member would again consider it worth while to introduce a serious cause in a Private Bill.

The Labour Party found its champion in Mr. MCENTEE, who resented Mr. HERBERT'S remarks about democracy and declared that he himself had the feeling that he had done his good deed for the day. The tactics employed he defended as legitimate use of the rules of procedure.

There was one bright spot, however, which was of general comfort, and that was the Road Traffic Bill's abolition of the fantastic regulation that the cost of a taxi-fare could not be shared by its occupants. Not that anyone has ever taken any notice of it, or that many have even been aware of it; but its presence on the Statute-book has not been creditable to the good sense of the nation.

Horsy persons will be grateful to Mr. EDE for raising the question of the "bob-a-nob" taxis which ply between railway stations and race-courses, and which would seem to be officially limited now to four fares, but no one will be surprised if they continue to overflow on the right days.

Monday, May 3rd.—Interest at Question-time was centred on the proposed evacuation of Basque women, children and old people, and Mr. EDEN was able to tell the House that, since assurances had been received from the Basque Government that the British Consul at Bilbao would be in a position to ensure strict impartiality, instructions had been given to His Majesty's ships to give all possible protection on the high seas to these refugees; and that this action would be taken in spite of General FRANCO's rejection of the British proposal. When Mr. EDEN further reported that General FRANCO had made alternative proposals of his own for ensuring the safety of the civilian Basque population, there was not unnaturally laughter.



A DEMOCRATIC EXCHANGE

"He was full of hot feelings about democracy."
Mr. A. P. Herbert.

"Members on the Opposition side had given a lifetime to the service of democracy."—*Mr. McEntee.*

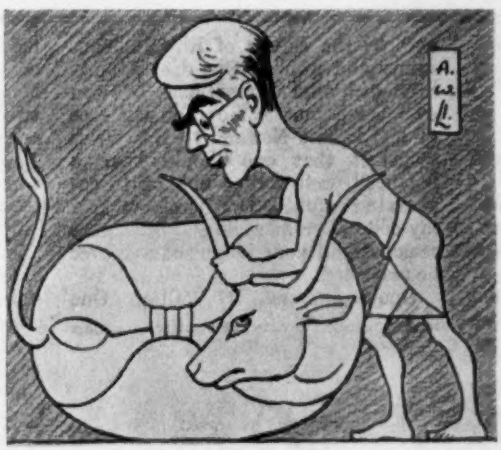
In answer to a number of questions about the Guernica massacre, Mr. EDEN said that he had asked for full information from the Ambassador and the Consul at Bilbao, and hoped to make a statement before the Whitsun adjournment.

Those who have obtained seats in the Abbey for the Coronation should look out for a box, placed in a prominent position, measuring about 12ft. × 4ft. × 4½ft., and if by reason of stout neighbours they should be undergoing any small discomfort, they can solace themselves with the thought that inside the box are no fewer than five Press photographers, suffering an incarceration of three hours in order that posterity shall have a close record of the ceremony.

Always an active humanitarian, Sir PERCY HARRIS raised the question of these brave fellows' probable survival, but Mr. R. S. HUDSON was full of optimism about it. It will be interesting to see if any stowaways take advantage of the arrangement.

Mr. ERNEST BROWN'S innocent regrets that the busmen had not remained at work while the inquiry was taking place, and his hope that they would soon put an end to the great public inconvenience they were causing, roused the Labour Party, who demanded that the company should come in for the MINISTER'S harsh words as well as the men. But Mr. BROWN, entirely imperturbable, replied that all he had done was to express his regrets. Most people who are not taxi-owners will surely share them.

In the course of the evening the Government's Head-drover, Mr. MORRISON, steered the Livestock Bill a little nearer the Statute-book without much opposition.



PREPARING FOR THE SLAUGHTER

(*Egyptian fresco, "New Empire" style*)

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE

The Foundations of Music

"Under Dr. Malcolm Sargent the chair sang with beauty and subtlety."
Daily Paper.



"ALBERT, IF YOU DON'T STOP GOIN' ON IN FRONT I SHALL LEAVE YOU BE'IND."

Correct Opinions

The Concert-goer's Guide

YOU say, Madam, that you "adore" Sibelius. But what a *gaffe*, what a tragic lack of connoisseurship! As well might you speak of a "covey of snipe." Reserve your adoration, you poor impulsive little thing, for beings more nebulously numinous. One does not "adore" Sibelius. One does not even enjoy him. One—hem!—one *acknowledges* him.

You talk, Madam, as if concert-going were a pleasurable pastime. But how wrong you are. One merely *attends* a concert. There is a correct reaction to each composer and every musical form. To the true connoisseur nothing is new or thrilling, but all is interesting and noteworthy. It is a question of how Sammons will shape in the Mozart, of whether Gerhardt will be up to standard in the Wolf. Suppress, my poor little madam, your programme-rustling excitement as the Brahms approaches and the unhealthy brilliance of your eyes as the chorus of Rhinemaidens waxes and wanes. One does not exhibit such obvious reactions. Did you ever see a muscle move on the face of Mr. Ernest Newman? No. It is sufficient that one should have a balanced, well-worded opinion to express in the interval. Wherefore follow my code of permissible and intelligent remarks and your judgment will ever be respected.

One is *impressed* by Walton. One may be (the lip curled a thought enigmatically) *fond* of Brahms. By Mendelssohn (here should the eye twinkle) one is *pleased*. Mozart one *accepts*. One *quite likes* Schubert. Before Beethoven one *cowers*—unless one is still at college, when it is prudent to claim *to have outgrown* him.

By Handel one may be either "frankly bored" or (a highly commendable eccentricity) "unblushingly delighted." For Chopin it is not inappropriate to "admit a bourgeois (or adolescent) weakness" or from him to get "an escapist thrill." Berlioz one "hesitates to over-rate." Verdi one "periodically rediscovers." From Grieg one is not averse. One is never more than partial to Puccini. One flirts with Ravel, shudders at Schumann, allows for experimental defects in Haydn. Dr. Arne one regards with no little scepticism; and of Rossini one takes a grave view. About Dvořák one has changed one's mind.

One taps an amused foot to Suppé, trips a deprecating measure to Sullivan, lilts an aloof forefinger to Délibes, and jerks a jovial head to Massenet.



"OF COURSE WE MUST FACE FACTS. IT 'S GOING TO MEAN WAITING."

It is quite *bon ton* to be "pathetically indifferent to" Elgar; but it is more strikingly original to dismiss him as "a concatenation of imperialistic fanfares." One does not attempt to deny a purely mathematical absorption in Bach: indeed, an admirable pose is to prefer reading his score to hearing him played. One endures, recalls an immature passion for, or is assaulted by Wagner. To cultivate an eccentric preoccupation with Sousa is an idiosyncrasy which, though most effective in a seasoned connoisseur, would be risky for a beginner.

One tolerates Tchaikovsky. For Rimsky-Korsákov one curbs a vulgar enthusiasm. At Gounod one shrugs impatiently. With Bizet one joins derisively in the chorus. To Delius one can only be *addicted*. One is laughingly, proudly, unrepentantly ignorant of or distressingly unconcerned with most modern British music; whilst the older music of our land should not detain one beyond a brief acquaintance with a madrigal or two, a detached sympathy with the devotees of Purcell, and a perverse championship of our drinking songs. Of Mascagni one grudgingly recognises the meretricious appeal. One is interested, irritatingly compelled or perturbed by, or has yet to make up one's mind about Schönberg and his school. To Hindemith or any other composer who secretly bores one one "brings an open mind."

As for jazz, now that it has achieved some measure of intellectual support, one regrets one's inability to see anything in it after all, for it is always prudent to be in a minority. For Richard Strauss one may with impunity confess to a depraved lust. With Liszt one keeps one's temper or cracks a harsh jest about his being nothing but a loose assemblage of codas and cadenzas.* One pooh-poohs or finds a hitherto unsuspected pioneer force in Cherubini. By Debussy one remains stolidly determined not to be seduced. At Hugo Wolf one temperately gasps. In Meyerbeer one takes or *evinces* an antiquarian or tolerant interest. One tries not to let intellectual snobbery preclude "a certain affection for" Percy Grainger. Of Palestrina one seems to have heard. It is quite safe never to have heard of Buxtehude.

* *Note.*—This opinion should not be held beyond the coming season, as it is probable that 1938 will hail Liszt as the pioneer musical apostle of Collective Insecurity.

It is not unseemly to wink at Warlock, wince at Waldteufel, resign oneself good-humouredly to Holst. In certain circles one may get away with the round assertion, tempered by an authoritative snigger, that one "is tickled pink" by Pergolesi. If one finds a composer totally incomprehensible it is more elegant to say that one "fails to establish a common bond" with him. If one has never heard of a musician whose work is apparently known and appreciated widely by others, ignorance may be concealed by observing "that he has an undeniable *naïf*, elusive, jejeune or old-world charm"; for if one happens to be right one's perspicacity is praised, and if wrong one gains an enviable reputation for irreverent wit. In any emergency a safe remark is "Of course one can't generalise . . ."

Go, therefore, Madam, and repent. Learn musical poise and breeding and sophistication. One does not, cannot, must not *adore* Sibelius. One may, it is true, kick oneself for ever having thought Beethoven the greater symphonist; one may always cite Sibelius to belittle Brahms, who at the best is *vieux jeu*; but further than that one cannot go.



THE SUPERSENSITIVE PORTER

At the Theatre

"THE GRAND DUCHESS"
(DALY'S)

IT is an interesting reflection that while a light opera based on modern warfare is almost inconceivable, this of OFFENBACH'S, the forerunner of so many belligerent frivolities in music, was first staged only seventy years ago.

Then war was still funny; Generals conducted operations decked in the cream of CLARKSON'S shop-window, and their armies, in defiance of climate, light and commonsense, found it a point of honour to present the enemy with a target as compact and highly-coloured as could possibly be arranged.

Military theory had still scarcely emerged from the close-season epoch when a soldier's diary told him the date of his first pot-shot of the year with almost as much accuracy as if the quarry had been pheasants and not men, and casualties were still too few to leave any lasting mark on the public consciousness. The scientists, in short, whose infinitely lethal ingenuity is so often held up to us for its contributions towards the happiness of mankind, had scarcely begun their game of demolishing the civilised world. Mr. G. P. ROBINSON, who has brought this libretto up to date, has wisely accepted the fact that humour has gone out of war and has made no attempt to substitute for *Fritz's* classical ruse of allowing the enemy to capture his ample stores of liquor any such unromantic trick as putting sand in the tanks of the enemy bombers.

That I failed to find this piece as amusing as I had been led to expect was possibly my own fault for not being a greater enthusiast for the conventions of comic opera, but it could certainly be cut with advantage by half-an-hour and speeded up a little. And, having said this, let me quickly add that the production is otherwise good, particularly on the side of dresses and décor, of which Mr. FREDERICK DAWSON has made a delightfully fresh and colourful job.

In the part of the *Grand Duchess* herself, made famous by HORTENSE SCHNEIDER, Miss ENID CRUICKSHANK sang well and admirably



OVERTURE FROM THE DUCHESS

Fritz . . . . . MR. BRUCE CARFAX
The Grand Duchess of Gerolstein . . MISS ENID CRUICKSHANK



GENERAL POST, OR A FEATHER OUT OF HIS CAP

General Boum . . . . . MR. W. S. PERCY
Fritz . . . . . MR. BRUCE CARFAX

combined public imperiousness with the private skittishness to which a lady was entitled who happened to be the law in her own land. That land being *Gerolstein*, first of Ruritanias, and the date the eighteenth century, her citizens no more than raised their bushy eyebrows at her promotion of *Fritz*, a dashing private who had caught her fancy, to the rank of Generalissimo within five minutes of their first meeting; and when, returning in triumph from his bloodless but headacheful rout of an enemy thirstier than prudent, he rejected her advances and remained loyal to his village girl, no one was any more surprised at her unconventional behaviour at the wedding-breakfast in ordering his instant execution. For the merciful reconciliation which immediately followed he had to thank the sudden spirit displayed by *Prince Paul*, a gentle suitor for the *Duchess's* hand.

In voice and personality Mr. BRUCE CARFAX was an excellent choice for *Fritz*, bringing to the part just the lightness and swagger it demanded. *General Boum*, most ferocious of cowards, was entertainingly played with a prodigious expenditure of energy by Mr. W. S. PERCY; Mr. RICHARD GOOLDEN contributed the subtlest humour of the evening as *Prince Paul*, about whose courtly affectations there was an authentic ring of the eighteenth century in Germany; Miss NANCY NEALE'S *Wanda*, *Fritz's* sweetheart, would have disturbed any Court, and she sang pleasantly; and Mr. EDDIE GARR'S *Baron Puck* was suitably pompous and unscrupulous.

A Chorus of both sexes, gay and well-drilled, did full justice to OFFENBACH'S charming melodies.

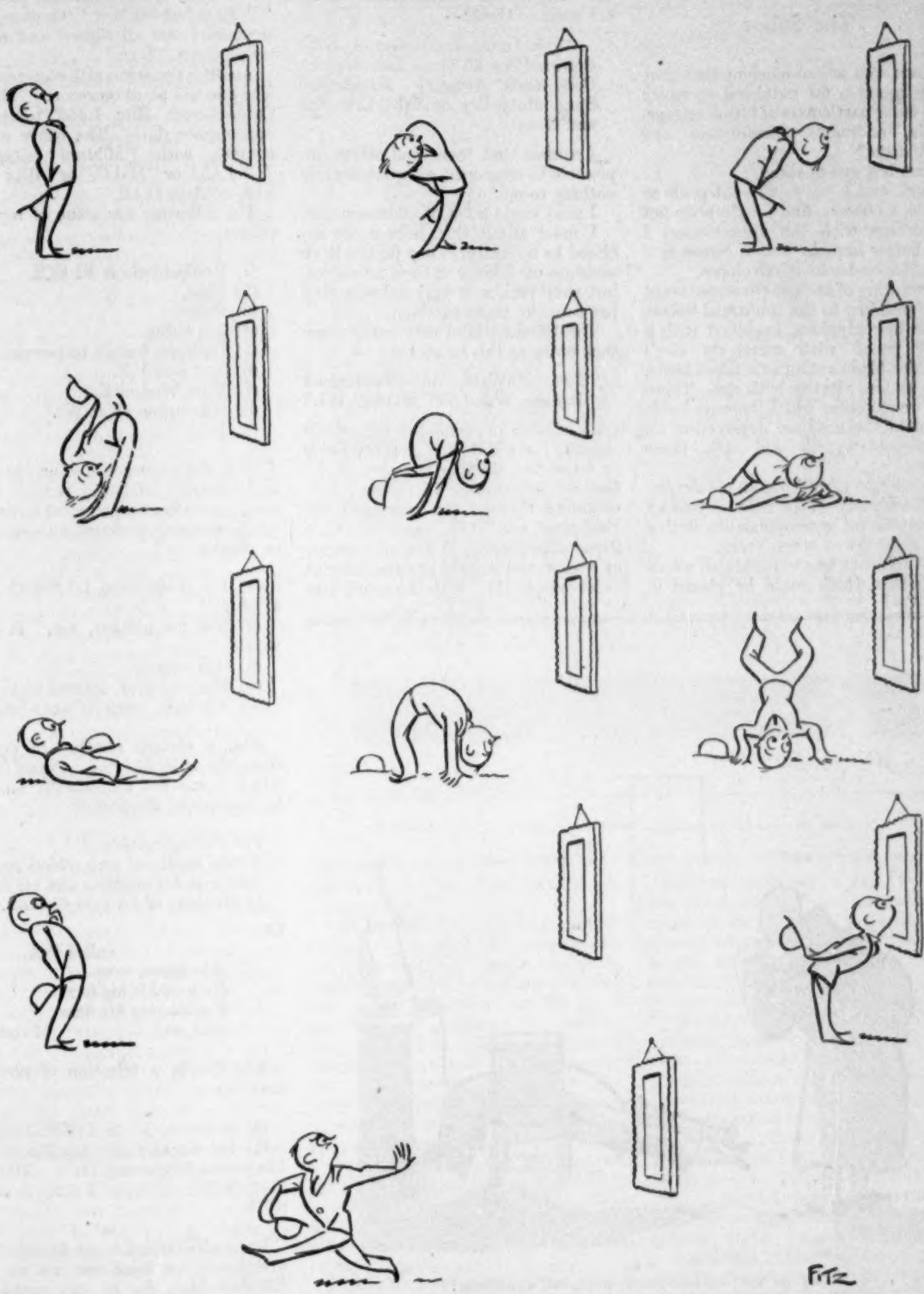
ERIC.

Taking the Long View

"Dame Laura Knight, who attended the meeting of the Selection Committee for the Royal Academy Show yesterday, is the first woman artist to serve in that capacity in Spanish Morocco."—*Malta Paper.*

"Turners wanted, accustomed to chuck work."—*Advt. in "Scotsman."*

For strike duty?



THE CRITIC

The Soboe

SOME men are so efficient that they carry round a fat notebook in which they enter particulars of future engagements, addresses, memoranda and *obiter dicta*.

I am not one of these.

I am, and I say so without pride or shame, a SOBOE. And for anybody not conversant with the abbreviation I had better explain that a Soboe is a Scribbler-on-backs-of-envelopes.

A scrutiny of ancient envelopes is apt to be puzzling to the confirmed Soboe. Those hieroglyphics, inscribed with a blunt pencil with somebody else's shoulder-blade acting as a tilted table, seem to lose vitality with age. Those brief mnemonics which appeared sufficient at the time are deprived of all significance at the end of a lunar month.

I have just turned out an old drawer and have analysed the notes dotted on the outside of correspondence dating back some six or seven years.

My first care was to isolate all words or phrases which could be placed in the category of "Total Loss.'" Here are some of them:—

S'gbl, Trzug, Velkh, Gyr ob Yobl, Spiring Clks, 55 Stm's Lan Brrrmp, Cork Zmls, Artpostle, Klindering, Sprg, Muty liry or Sqbl, Crk, Spz and Owo.

I confess that these and others impossible to transcribe mean absolutely nothing to me.

I next made a list of addresses, etc.

I must admit that Soboes are inclined to be cocky. They do not have absolute confidence in their memories, but they reckon it only takes a tiny jog to make them function.

The Efficient Man may make some such entry as this in his book:—

"Tom McWatt, 45 Blunderbuss Square, W.2. Tel. Mayfair 177."

On a similar occasion the Soboe will think to himself: "Well, I'm not likely to forget the Blunderbuss part of it," and scribble down "45 (Tom)," and, confident that he can remember the Exchange, add "177." Or, "That's a funny coincidence; 45 was my number at school, and Aunt Alice's number at Colchester is 717," with the result that he is later faced with the problem: "T. Blunderbuss May." Or even, "I'll remember *that* all right," and merely write down "Tom."

And it's the same with engagements. The one will place on record: "Mildred Cobb Lunch Ritz 1.45" under the appropriate date. The other will be content with "Mildred Ritz," or "Cb 1.45," or "M'd C," or "Ritz 1.45" with no date at all.

The following are some of my own efforts:—

(1) Rockwhistle & Fl EC2.
(2) Flax.
(3) Peter.
(4) 2 R Gdns.
(5) Philippa fortn't to-morrow.
(6) Spit and V.Z.
(7) Mon, Wed or Sat.
(8) S'hampton (F & W).
(9) 1472.

Then there are relics of urgent communications furtively passed to a neighbour when speech must have been too dangerous—perhaps in a restaurant or theatre:—

(1) Fat, bald chap Ld Gobble (*née* Dogley)!!
(2) Not his mother, ass. It's his wife!!
(3) O.K. signor.
(4) Slip us a quid. Round looks exp.
(5) Nip bott, when he's not looking.

Also a certain number of poems, complete or in skeleton. Pearls of wit which I was not unnaturally anxious to remember. Such as:—

The Valetudinarian
Should ought but very seldom can
Join with his nephews and his nieces
In laughing at his own diseases.

Or,

called Van,
A very pec. man.
He used his big toes
For blowing his nose
And, etc. I *can*!

And finally a selection of obvious ones like—

(1) P–G– – – C– –G IT[illegible]KSN[illegible]C.
(2) 10/- e.w and 10/- dble Yokohama Lassie and Mugwump II. (–50/-).
(3) S. ZH. W 4 Sp N 5 Sp(!) E No S 7H.

From all of which it can be seen that a Soboe is at least one up on the Efficient Man, for he can spend an amusing and free afternoon looking at old envelopes instead of paying for a seat at the pictures.



"WHY DO YOU DO ALL THOSE HORRIBLE EXERCISES?"
"TO HARDEN MYSELF UP."
"WHAT FOR?"
"SO THAT I CAN DO STILL MORE HORRIBLE EXERCISES."

Grandeur

I HAVE always mildly disapproved of Sunday cinemas, perhaps owing to the influence of an old aunt of mine who had very strong Sabbatarian views. "How would you feel," she used to say, "if the cinema caught fire while you were sitting there on a Sunday and you were burned to a cinder? How would you feel when you saw your picture in the papers next day telling everybody how you spent your Sundays?"

But last Sunday I happened to be in Stepney. I had a couple of hours to kill, and, apart from walking up and down the Mile End Road, there seemed to be only two ways of killing them. Either I could go into a pin-table saloon and risk gambling away my fare home, or I could brush the memory of my aunt aside and stalk sinfully into a cinema, of which there were four within sight, all just opening their doors. And when I found that one of them was showing *Pearls Before Swine* (with Bert Bristle and Sadie Sweetmouth), which I had missed in the West-End, I threw my aunt to the winds and planked down my shilling.

The performance had not started, and the place was brilliantly lighted. The first twenty rows (the sixpennies) were packed tight with happy human beings whistling untunefully to drown the still less tuneful canned overture. The sixpennies were full, and unlucky latecomers were standing at the sides, *but I was the only shilling in the place.* There were about fifty rows reserved for shillings (the old aristocracy) and I sat alone in the middle of a vast emptiness. I couldn't help feeling like one of CHESTERTON'S "Last Sad Squires," the rest of them having apparently ridden "slowly towards the sea" and accidentally fallen over the cliffs. People in the sixpennies turned round and looked at me curiously, and I was glad I was wearing my best suit. Like CLEOPATRA, I have often had "immortal longings in me," but they were all satisfied by the supreme grandeur of that moment.

Then the charm was broken by the appearance of a rival aristocrat, who suddenly appeared in a seat across the gangway. No doubt he was a good citizen and a man highly popular in his own circles, but I resented his companionship in the sacred shillings. Frankly he had not the air of a shilling. His hat was too large and too black, his overcoat was too square about the shoulders, and he had four big pimples and a green tie. If ever a man bore all the hall-marks of a sixpenny it was he.



"THERE, OLGA, I TOLD YOU THIS MORNING IT WAS GOING TO RAIN."

No longer was I the cynosure of all the sixpenny eyes. Many things have been said about the inbred conservatism of the British Public, but on this occasion they left me flat. No longer was the house interested in discussing my tasteful green pork-pie hat, my small military moustache, my pale and interesting face. With one accord they concentrated their glances on the newcomer, who smirked back at them and even waved gaily to some friends in the sixpennies. I felt that this was the last straw, and was contemplating quietly strangling the man who had thus betrayed his caste when a large attendant approached him and asked to see his ticket.

I trust I am not more malicious than the next man, but it was with a feeling of deep satisfaction that I saw the interloper marched away by the attendant and ignominiously made to stand by the wall with the other late-coming sixpennies. My heart warmed to the attendant, and when he approached me I smiled winningly.

"Let's see *your* ticket," he said.

The sixpennies had a splendid five minutes watching me looking for my ticket. Personally I gave up hope from the first, because I *always* lose tickets. I was still searching when the lights went down, and the man was quite rude when I offered him a pound-note and said I would pay again. He told me to go back to the pay-desk, but I felt that I had had enough entertainment for one evening and slipped quietly out into the night.

But I was rather aggrieved not to read in the papers next day that the cinema had been burned down and the spurious "shilling" reduced to a cinder.

Spring Jottings, 1937

I AM presuming you of course to have thrown away the half-dozen suits you bought last month, so glaringly *fin d'hiver*, and all your hats, jackets, skirts, etc., which are bound to have a pre-primavera atmosphere about them. Don't *hoard* your clothes. 1936 will always look 1936 to the meanest intelligence, and January, February and March, 1937, have already their unmistakable stamp. Be ruthless with your wardrobe; strip it to the last coat-hanger. Here are a few basic points which you must not lose sight of while you are madly filling it up again.

Shoulders.—Very significant. Keep them so.

Belts.—Must meet round waist; or, alternatively, if too loose, holes must be slit or *nicked* in them. This can be done very simply with a pair of nail-scissors in the home. But belts—what a heaven-sent opportunity! Be a little *outré*, startle your friends. Take a piece of rope from the garage—that piece which has fastened the luggage to the back of the car this many a day—twist it round you, nip off the end with tar on it. Be a dryad, a tree-nymph; tear the ivy from the front of the house—it wants stripping anyhow—curl it about your dress. If it has been raining it will drip in a very *outré* way. Be a Cleopatra and writhe an asp round your waist. (I advise removing the sting first; but there is no doubt it is far more bizarre to leave it in.)

Waists.—Still round the middle. *Later.*—Have telephoned Paris. Still round the middle. Something rather appealing about them.

Figures.—Quiet: 1937: unexaggerated. Try not to be over 5ft. 10 in. or under 5ft. 1in. Lithe. Don't be afraid of crouching like a panther or leaning carelessly against the furniture like a young Bacchanal. It will make a definite impression on people's minds.

Jewellery.—A single huge diamond brooch pinned against your midnight black velvet dress is strikingly effective. Or two huge diamond brooches—against any sort of dress—are even more effective. For that matter there is nothing to be said against pearls, sapphires, opals, amethysts, emeralds, etc., etc. Don't restrict yourself.

Knees and Ankles.—Don't move them. Paris has them where they are for the present. (Unless you are knock-kneed; in which case bend slightly outward.)

A Hint.—As you slip into the Ritz, Berkeley, Dorchester, "Goat and Compasses," etc., what will first meet your eye? Buttons. Thousands. Yes, it is to be a Button Spring. Don't be afraid of them. Only that piquante, lovely Lady Dough and Dair has so far worn a row of real oysters with a pearl in each; and I doubt if this will become universal. Daisy Egbert had a crazy little border of alternate aspirin and throat-lozenges to her dress, which we all loved. Let yourself go over buttons. Don't be repressed. Get rid of your inhibitions. Use anything. Save up your solitaire marbles and boiled sweets. Plaster them over you. You can't go wrong.

And the evenings? *Quel choix!* You can be a Greek statue (or even KEATS' "Grecian Urn"), standing perfectly still, with a tangle of plasticene curls (don't try to comb them out for a week); or, if yours is a more mobile *genre*, electrify everyone by skipping in in CHANIPELLI's disgracefully brief *gamine* tunic, beating a tambourine, with a straw in your mouth; or be a daughter of Neptune, and pour over the banisters in a glorious sheath of



"I 'LL HAVE TO DIET."



"I TELL YOU IT *isn't* BY EPSTEIN."



"Don't trouble to get up, Mrs. Meadows. I can let myself out."

shiny fish-scale (a speck difficult to wear), with mock seaweed inextricably twisted round your neck. How can so many of you stay quite dull and herd-like with opportunities like these to express your personalities?

And now a whisper *of what is happening in the Big Houses.*

Well, Molinet has shortened her skirts and tightened her belt; her suits are brusque, rude, unhelpful; she puts mustard-yellow beside flaring geranium-pink and hastily turns her back on it. I dropped into Scapineux and caught a glimpse of a violent scarlet skirt, split up the side, ruched round the hem and splashed with lilac spots. I instantly dropped out again. Paquatosti will envelope you in a cloud of butter-muslin, sprinkle you with tinsel, and catch you up at the back with an enormous platinum buckle attached to a sharp prong. Harman Havilland—at night—will fling round you an endless ethereal scarf, and race about with it until you are swathed from head to foot like an Egyptian queen (a dead one). Steville will spray you with metal and put you in a saint's niche; or you yourself can wrap yourself in a blanket and put yourself to bed.

Colours are epic, momentous. These are the ones to go for: ostrich-egg cream, blood scarlet, any shade of pure snow-white, all the neutrals and naturals, entrée-dish silver, coal-mine (or North-country) black, bathwater beige, the bold racecourse tones, fiercest maroon, ostrich-egg cream, blood scarlet, any shade of . . .

(*continued on p.* 823).

One last rather intriguing fashion-note. If you really want to be a little amusing, out of the common rut, get one of Coquin's witty birds'-nest hats, perch it lightly on your head, borrow or steal one or two real birds'-eggs, pop them in, and even—if you are daring enough—a real bird to sit on top. Choose your bird to express your personality. A cuckoo would not be a wise choice. In the country a pheasant might inspire the neighbouring Colonel to bring out his gun. But in Paris I have seen a Rhode Island Red worn with distinctive effect; and the teeniest weeniest common garden wren, at a slight angle, on the *right type*, can be irresistible. It is all really most amusing. In fact your friends will probably split their sides.

Just one other but desperately important reminder: your face. Don't forget about it. It must be a nice one and it must be 1937. Let Marigold Matskin give you this in forty to forty-five minutes.

Method

I 'm a methodical sort of chap,
And I've always thought it proper
For silver to go in the left-hand pocket
And leave the right for copper.

But now I'm worried. I cannot sleep;
And what I want to know
Is in which of the two do you think that these
New threepenny-bits should go.

Just to Keep You Interested

"Coronation.—Two Beds Wanted by two ladies, on the route of the Coronation procession. What offers?"

Advt. in "The Times."



"Of course, Bert always be'aves like a gentleman when it's incumbink on 'im, Connie."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

"Stocky"

It is not easy nowadays to realise how slender were the baby Victoria's chances of accession, how "difficult" she was as a young Queen; but the good genius who safeguarded her precarious youth undoubtedly deserves Judge Pierre Crabitès' epithet, *Victoria's Guardian Angel* (Routledge, 12/6). Arriving in England in the modest capacity of physician-in-ordinary to Princess Charlotte's husband, Leopold, Baron Stockmar devoted himself first to that astute widower and secondly to the little girl who promised to reopen the Coburg chapter so unluckily closed by Charlotte's death. Indigestion, feelingly attributed to English cooking, and a probably resultant hypochondria, did not prevent the sagacious and personally disinterested Baron from becoming "paternal friend and trusted confessor" to the Royal Family; though he had the misfortune to outlive his "beloved pupil," Prince Albert. He protected Victoria from her mother's proposed regency, modified her Whig partisanship and did his best to temper the unhappy results of her political correspondence with Melbourne. He did not get on with Albert Edward. "The nursery," he wrote, "gives me more trouble than . . . a kingdom." But his self-effacing triumphs undoubtedly merit the graceful recognition of this well-informed and sprightly biography.

Memorial

The author of *Illusion and Reality* (Macmillan, 18/-) was recently killed in action in Spain, supporting at the crux those principles of popular government in which in his writing he has declared his intellectual faith. Under the pen-name of "Christopher Caudwell" he has written a book which cannot be read with understanding except in the light of his death, for though he has described his work as a "study of the sources of poetry," his method has been to use a wide familiarity with English verse, side by side with a specialised knowledge of both psychology and sociology, profoundly to illuminate a single Communistic thesis. The social structure of our human civilisation, he asserts, its movement and decay in all its changes and gradations between liberty and slavery, has always and of necessity declared itself in its poetry. The tortured incoherence of the moderns is no less explicable in his analysis than the free outrush of Shakespeare or the polished couplets of Pope. This country has lost with "Christoper Caudwell" an original and constructive thinker, and just possibly the human race in an hour of change a potential leader. He was twenty-eight years old.

"Slim Jannie"

Mr. H. C. Armstrong has a reputation for writing "vigorous, frank and unbiassed biographies" of living personalities. *Grey Steel* (Arthur Barker, 9/-) is the name he has given to a life of General J. C. Smuts, and he puts

the reader on his guard by adding as a sub-title "A Study in Arrogance." He seems in fact to take a delight in accentuating all the least pleasing features of his victim. As a young farm-lad SMUTS is represented here as a weak, sickly child, with a strong sense of inferiority that persisted into later life and could only be masked by an abrupt artificial manner. After a methodical preparation at school and college, where he was uniformly unpopular, he became a barrister, a journalist, and at last turned his attention to politics. Mr. ARMSTRONG insists that SMUTS could only produce good work when attached to someone bigger than himself. Thus he was first taken up by CECIL RHODES, who had noticed him when he was a student at Stellenbosch. Then he decided that his future lay with PAUL KRUGER and the Dutch, and, sweeping violently from one loyalty to the other, became more hostile to England than the staunchest Krugerites. Finally came his alliance with LOUIS BOTHA. Of his work in the Great War his biographer thinks little. He represents him as having bungled the campaign against the Germans in East Africa and then hastily cleared out, leaving to his successor the mere wreckage of an army. As a member of the War Cabinet he may have done good work, but his reputation was vastly exaggerated. Finally, when BOTHA died and left him as the undisputed head of South African politics, he showed himself unworthy of the opportunity. Written in a curiously jerky style, the book is nevertheless easy to read. It is also inexpensive, but it is abundantly clear that the author dislikes his subject and considers him to have been grossly over-praised.



"JUST YOU MARK MY WORDS, CIVILISATION IS ON THE BRINK OF COLLAPSE."
"DON'T YOU WORRY, ME LAD. I'VE BEEN WHERE THERE WASN'T ANY, AND IT WEREN'T 'ALF BAD."

English Background

Devastating as is the ages' access of uniformity, you can still find characteristic traces of England on the marches of rural counties—usually, if you are a walker, at the costly and cumbersome juncture of four one-inch surveys. It is these last "reservations" of tranquillity and sound living that Mr. H. J. MASSINGHAM celebrates in *Genius of England* (CHAPMAN AND HALL, 7/6). To read these delightful essays is to refurbish memories and rekindle the spirit of discovery, so that you end by dreaming yourself back into such gracious provincial capitals as Sherborne or planning yet another pilgrimage to the yews and junipers of Cranborne Chase. The present volume is perhaps a little more heterogeneous than its forerunners; and the concluding article—interesting in itself—on SAMUEL BUTLER'S New Zealand is topographically and spiritually out of the picture. But to revisit Chipping Campden with Chipping Campden's prime devotee; to explore the Isle of Axeholme with an enthusiast for an historic race of smallholders; to meet a sensitive labourer in the prime of life among the lonely Chiltern pastures—these are experiences worth savouring. And after all, as we note in passing, the greater men have come from the smallest places.

In a Bird World

An enchanting book, not quite like any other one has met before, is Mr. GUSTAV ECKSTEIN'S *Canary* (FABER AND FABER, 7/6); and being so much a thing apart, it cannot be very easily described. It has no plot, it has countless tiny shreds of plot; it has no hero or heroine, it has half-a-dozen; it is full of tragedy—and comedy; it is the lightest of light reading and frolics on its way over a foundation of very sober thought. It is simply the story of how Mr. ECKSTEIN bought a canary as a gift for a friend who didn't want it, and then, impressed with the happiness of the bird flying about in his big laboratory, could not bear to have it

caged again, bought another to keep it company, and so was involved, almost before he was aware of it, in the engrossing hobby of running a community of the little yellow birds. Mr. ECKSTEIN writes most charmingly (in American), and he seems—it is a great deal to say—entirely worthy of his great position as arbiter among the canaries.

A Seventeenth-Century Crime Story

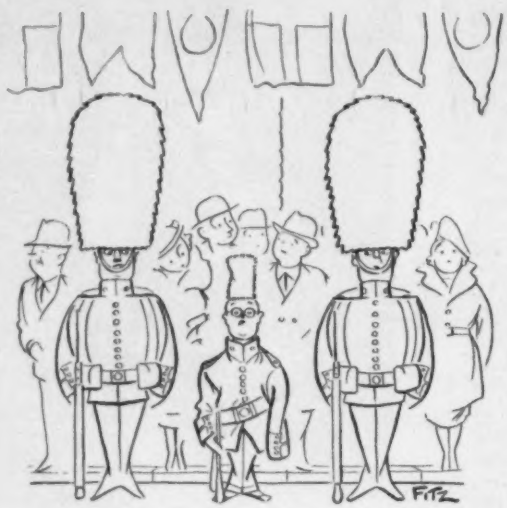
The fact that quite a number of people tried to poison Sir THOMAS OVERBURY and why, his death and the scandal which followed are the material from which "GEORGE R. PREEDY" has woven yet another historical novel, *My Tattered Loving* (JENKINS, 7/6). It is a vividly told tale; the lovely little FRANCES HOWARD, married as a child to the Earl of ESSEX and soon deeply in love with KING JAMES's favourite, ROBERT CARR, is the principal character, and, well as she deserved her miserable end, wins the reader's sympathy; for no young creature could have had worse guidance, and her faithfulness to the man she loved explains much that it cannot excuse. "GEORGE PREEDY" writes carelessly, and in an effort to create seventeenth-century atmosphere occasionally repeats some splash of period colour until it is almost ridiculous; but the majority of the actors show in high relief and the general state of confusion and cross-purposes is very true to life. Indeed the story sets one thinking how little human nature varies in three centuries, though crude bumping-off in the gangster classes has superseded poisoning among the aristocracy.

Light Essays

Small Talk (CONSTABLE, 6/-) is a disarming title for a book of essays, and even the least good ("On Being Efficient" perhaps?) in Mr. HAROLD NICOLSON's collection could not fairly be described in less complimentary terms. Mr. NICOLSON takes pleasure in disarming criticism; hardly has one thought that at moments he allows his style to become Beerbohm-and-sugar when one recalls that he is quite ready to laugh at it himself (as, for example, when he ends a paragraph of rhythmic enumeration with the sentence, "The curate, hanging behind, would hang behind"—cadence without statement). Three of the best of these twenty-eight papers are "The Edwardian Week-end," "Mr. William Fletcher" (a first-rate little biography of BYRON's valet), and "The Man Who Knew Everybody" (a story in the same manner as those in the author's earlier book, *Some People*). Some are about America and American institutions, some are reminiscences of travel and diplomacy, some are light but still vigorous expressions of a point of view. All, as is to be expected of such an accomplished writer's work, are amusing, sensible and easy to read.

A Sparkling Finish

If an impresario must die, then admittedly there is something poetic in the dropping of a jeroboam of good champagne on to his head from the flies during a stage-party; but it was difficult to see why anyone should wish to play such a shabby trick on a man so widely respected as *Alfie Meyer*. At the time of his shocking liquidation his company, an English one, was on tour in the Antipodes, and Miss NGAIO MARSH, who describes the case with admirable lucidity in *Vintage Murder* (BLES, 7/6), is able to fill in her background from two subjects which she evidently knows intimately—New Zealand and the theatre. By a fortunate chance *Roderick Alleyn* of the C.I.D., a detective with a sense of humour, was present at the party, and his conduct of the case should meet with general approval. The book is laudably free from wearisome gibes at the police, its working-out is sound and its gallery of stage-types is very well observed.



BLUFF

The Law and the Profits

The Man Who Wasn't There (COLLINS, 7/6) would not have suffered if some of the people connected with *Christopher Hyde's* murder had been less thick-skinned. But although it is difficult to sympathise with any of them, the problem that Mr. ANTHONY GILBERT puts before his readers is first-rate. *Hyde's* death caused no lamentations; indeed his sudden exit was so opportune for his wife that she was justifiably suspected of having hastened it with a dose of hyoscin. Not until a lawyer, appropriately called *Crook*, began to employ his astute brain on her behalf did she appear to have a chance of escaping conviction. The atmosphere of this story may be rather stuffy, but in spite of that it is, for the ingenuity of its problem alone, a noteworthy addition to the ceaseless stream of detective fiction.

On Thin Ice

The legal procedure in and around Baltimore, where the chief events of *The Dark Ships* (COLLINS, 7/6) took place, may seem to British eyes strange and casual, but ultimately justice gained a sweeping victory. It was a difficult and double part which *Neill Tryon* had to play, for officially he was engaged to find a girl, while privately his one desire was to hide her. An abductor had been murdered, and suspicion inevitably fell upon the girl who was to have filled the *rôle* of victim. Then she vanished and the hunt began. A number of queer people were connected with this chase, but Mr. HULBERT FOOTNER has an explanation for all their eccentricities, and his portrait of *Tryon* is both subtle and vivid.

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Charivaria

RECENTLY a lawyer in a German court lost his temper and punched the magistrate on the nose. In this country, happily, more respect is generally shown to the beak.

★ ★ ★

Ultra-modern forms of poetry, it has been stated, need no beginning and no end. And there is a growing movement in favour of dispensing with the middle too.

★ ★ ★



It is thought that many Londoners who have been cycling to business during the bus strike may be tempted to continue the practice. The luxury of a seat all the way to the office is an almost irresistible lure.

★ ★ ★

"Wanted immediately after Coronation cheap bus., anywhere."
Advt. in "News Chronicle."

We could have done with one before it.

★ ★ ★

"What is a hamlet?" asks a headline. A place so small that the inhabitants never gossip. They know.

★ ★ ★



It is revealed that during the past three months fewer calls have been made on the fire-brigade than in any recent quarter. In some directions this is looked upon as being an indication that business generally is improving.

★ ★ ★

Scientists are still puzzling over the fact that in a basket of strawberries, in direct contravention of a well-known law of nature, the heaviest specimens always rise to the top.

★ ★ ★

It was disclosed in a Hampshire hamlet last week that a "centenarian" claiming to be the Oldest Inhabitant was actually born in 1867. It is high time he made way for an older man.

Most film stars, we are told, work hard in the interests of their publicity. Nobody would ever suggest that they tried dodging the column.

★ ★ ★

"Winner of 'Nutshells' Contest No. 63 has found that inspiration for his snappiest ideas comes directly after playing all night on a saxophone."—*Competition Note.*

He is lucky to get only nutshells.

★ ★ ★

The news that Professor EINSTEIN is busy on another Theory will be welcome tidings for those who never understood his last one.

★ ★ ★



"Is it possible that people *ever* laughed at these jokes?" asks a writer, quoting some last-century humour. Well, there are still *some* people who can't see anything not funny in them.

★ ★ ★

"Collection of over 1,000 war medals at reduced prices."
The Exchange and Mart.

What a snip for GOERING.

★ ★ ★

A sixpence was found inside a trout caught recently by a South of England angler. It was probably saving up to be a goldfish.

★ ★ ★

An explorer states that in some parts of the world a wife and a bottle of whisky can be bought for as little as half-a-crown. They say, however, that the whisky is pretty poor stuff.

★ ★ ★

"The ruddy-complexioned drivers of the old horse-cabs were a fine-looking lot," says a journalist. All hansom men were slightly sunburnt.

★ ★ ★



According to *The Star* seasickness can kill fish. This explains why one so seldom meets them travelling on cross-Channel steamers.

Old 'Enery's Coronation

"Well, tell us, what did ye see?" we said,
As we sat in the bar at the "George's 'Ead."
Old 'Enery scratches 'is ear an' thinks.
"Bitter," says 'e, "is what I drinks.

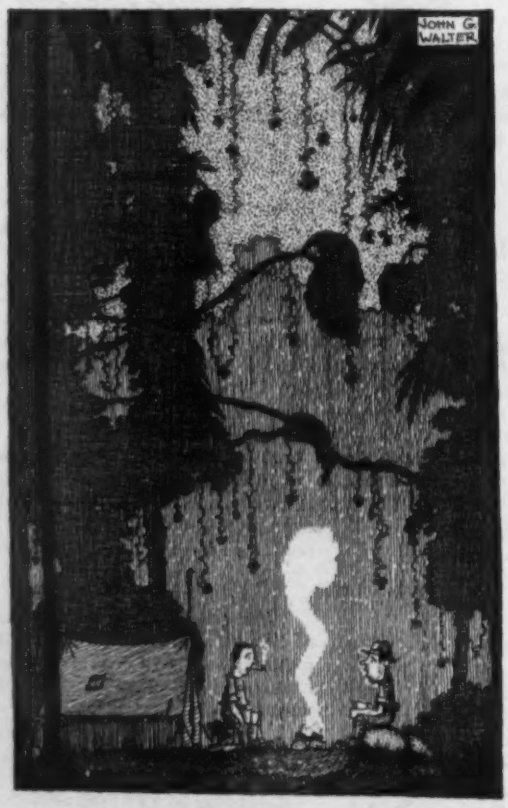
Hunnerds an' hunnerds o' folks was there,
More than there was at th' Michaelmas Fair.
Such shoutin' an' cheerin' as I never 'eard;
An' I 'ad a pie full o' lemon curd.
I see plenty o' flags, an' a mort o' chaps
Wi' red, white an' blue all over their caps,
An' coppers there was, ar, more than enough—
But Lunnon beer is 'orrible stuff!"

"But wasn't there sojers an' that," we said—
"Some on 'em blue an' t'others in red?"
"Ar, summat o' that there was," says 'e—
"A pint o' bitter will do fer me.

There was Albert's Joe an' 'is Cousin Bill,
An' Annabel Briggs o' Mulberry 'Ill;
We went to a cayfe an' 'ad poached eggs,
An' I spilt 'ot tea down one o' me legs.

A pretty fair do on the 'ole it were;
I 'ad nine rides on the movin' stair;
But I wasn't sorry to come along back,
For Lunnon beer is 'orrible tack!"

"'Tis famous," we said, "the things you've seen,
But didn't you see the KING and QUEEN?"
Old 'Enery choked on 'is mug o' brew;
"By gum!" says 'e, "was they there too?"



"NOW THAT WE ARE HOPELESSLY LOST, ANSTRUTHER, IT LOOKS AS IF I SHALL MISS THE OLD WYKEHAMIST DINNER."

News and the Muse

"I AM sure you will remember," Everard Galliproof said, digging the interior of his pipe with a used safety-match, "that very singular case reported in the newspapers some weeks ago about the Polish gentleman whose beard was caught in the chain of his bicycle."

"I remember it perfectly," I assured him.

"You will also recollect," Everard went on, "that immediately after the publication of the story someone wrote to *The Times* newspaper to say that it had been familiar to him for many years in the form of a humorous verse."

"I also recollect that," I agreed.

"Very well, then," said Everard. "Now listen to this—'The wife of a baker living in a village near Stuttgart . . . had been washing in a barn and had used a large tub, which for convenience she placed on a low handcart. Her task completed, she decided to have a bath, and, disrobing, climbed into the tub.'"

Everard paused. "This is from my evening newspaper," he interpolated in a defensive tone of voice. "It isn't *meant* to be literature." He continued to quote—

"'But the added weight started the cart moving. Before she could clamber out, the cart—with tub and bather—struck against the barn-door'—blah, blah, blah—'only stopping when it reached the middle of the market square.'

"There!" he finished triumphantly. "What do you make of that?"

"*E* definitely *ben trovato*," I commented. "But I don't, offhand, see the connection with the bearded Pole and his bicycle accident."

"You don't? I'll read it to you again." He did so. "Now do you see?"

I said I was afraid I must seem awfully dull, but really I didn't. Everard shrugged his shoulders hopelessly.

"I should have thought it stuck out a mile," he said. "Listen: *Stuttgart*, *hand-cart*, market-place or *mart*."

"I believe I understand what you're getting at," I said as the light began to dawn.

"It's as plain as the back-row of the chorus, my dear man," Everard insisted. "I've never heard the rhyme, but it ought to be easy enough to reconstruct. Something like this it must go: 'An old baker's wife of Stutt*gart* Used always to bathe in a cart'—er—er——"

"'But it happened one day,'" I suggested, "'That the cart broke away——'"

"'And exposed her to view in the mart,'" Everard wound up proudly. "Don't you see? I believe we've hit on something really big here. Probably the Press agencies of the world have been doing this sort of thing systematically for years, and no one has ever suspected them until now. Boy, what a wild surmise! I feel like stout CORTEZ when with eagle eyes he stood in Venice on the Bridge of Sighs." He sensed that there was something amiss with his quotation and recommenced the excavations in his pipe.



NOT TO BE TAKEN AWAY

"THE GRAND OCCASION'S OVER—BUT I THINK I OUGHT TO LEAVE THAT ONE UP."



Mews Authority. "SHE 'S SHOWY, BUT 'EAVY ON THE OIL."

"Then you think——?" I began, eagerly picking up an evening newspaper.

Everard took it from me. "Think! My good fellow, I'm convinced of it. Let's have a look. Here you are, for example, straight away: Someone in Reading wants her marriage dissolved because her husband takes twenty cats to bed with him at night. I mean, obviously, when you find a piece of news like that you begin to think."

"Reading," I repeated thoughtfully. "Reading."

"Bedding," Everard suggested.

"Wedding."

"Exactly." Everard reflected for a moment. "'There was a young lady of Reading,'" he produced at length, "'Who wanted to cancel her wedding. She alleged that her spouse Made a zoo of the house, And kept twenty cats in the bedding.'"

"It's unmistakable," I assured him. "What are you going to do, then—expose the news agencies for frauds?"

"Expose them? No, of course not." Everard decided that the chances of finding mineral deposits in his pipe were small and put it away in his pocket. "No—two can play at that game. What I shall do is to start a news agency of my own. There are a whole lot of exclusive stories I can supply the Press with. For instance, there is an old man in—well, somewhere or other—who boarded a boat with the intention of paying a visit to London for the Coronation; but unfortunately his friends pointed out that the boat was aground, and he was seized with a temporary fainting-fit.

"Then there is the young romantic poet from Tokio who confounded the Japanese literary critics with his latest work by introducing revolutionary new methods of scansion. We might go further afield and tell the public about the unfortunate business of young Foster, a Doctor of Philosophy of London University, who was drowned in the recent severe rains. He was believed to be making for Gloucester at the time. And what a gorgeous headline we could have about the eccentric resident of Ryde: 'CLERGYMAN'S NIECE'S STRANGE OBSESSION.' When told by our representative that the danger from cattle was actually extremely small, she replied, 'Yes, I know.'

"Indeed," Everard perorated, "there is only one trifling objection to the scheme, and that is that the news I should supply would not be true. But I can't help thinking that when it comes to bearded Poles and peripatetic German washerwomen it doesn't matter a hoot to the public whether the stories they read are fact or fiction.

"And in any case," he added, "everyone knows that most people would rather be entertained than instructed."

The Guide

"Having been born and bred in London," said my friend Pokewhistle, "I am naturally startlingly ignorant about the Sights. I mean of course the brick-and-stone Sights. I move enough in Society to be familiar with most of the human ones."

"You mean the Tower of London and the Wallace Collection and that sort of thing?" I suggested.

"Precisely," said Pokewhistle. "If you were to ask me to take you to the London Museum, for instance (of which my provincial friends speak very highly), I should be obliged to consult a policeman or go to the expense of a taxi. I have a vague sort of idea that it is somewhere between Aldgate and Hyde Park Corner, and that it contains either a collection of QUEEN VICTORIA'S dolls or QUEEN ANNE'S teapots, but that is the most I can say. And if you were to ask me to take you to see the Trooping of the Guard——"

"The Guard doesn't troop," I corrected him; "it is the Colours that troop. The Guard merely changes."

Pokewhistle waved his hand deprecatingly. "If you were to ask me to take you to see it," he said, "I shouldn't know where to go, or on what day or at what time. And if you were to ask me to take you to listen to Bow Bells I should be equally unable to oblige. I presume that Bow Bells are in Bow, but where is Bow?"

"It's one of the stations on the District Line," I said cleverly—"Bow Road."

"But quite likely Bow Road isn't anywhere near Bow," said Pokewhistle sadly, "and I should look a fool if I got there and found no bells. It may be like Tottenham Court Road, so-called because it is nowhere near Tottenham. Tottenham is another place I couldn't lay my finger on if I wanted to. There's a football team connected with it, but that is the limit of my knowledge."

"You know the Zoo at any rate," I said comfortingly.

"I do and I don't," he said. "I once tried to take an old aunt there, and we wandered for hours and hours round Regent's Park trying to find the way in. We could *hear* it but we couldn't find an entrance. Of course I could have asked, but as I had told my aunt that I practically lived there I didn't like to show my ignorance."

"But why," I asked him, "if you have been content not to know London for so long are you suddenly worrying about it?"

"Because," said Pokewhistle, "I have at last a unique opportunity of getting a thorough knowledge of the Metropolis. I have made acquaintance with a young fellow who knows London inside out and is overflowing with interesting historical anecdotes about every Sight worth seeing. He knows the exact spot where KING CHARLES lost his head and WALTER RALEIGH did the dry-cleaners a bit of good by dropping his cloak in a puddle. He is a charming young fellow with a fervent love of London that I have seldom seen equalled."

"Where does he come from?" I asked.

"Australia," said Pokewhistle.

Justice

SERGEANT, last week you stopped me on the road
Because you said my speed was fifty-three.
I fear I answered, "Fifty-three be blowed!"
And so you took my name and summonsed me.

I'm not complaining, Sergeant, though they found
That I had done the speed you said I did.
Before I had been offered seven pound,
But now I've sold the car for twenty quid. M. H.



"HAROLD'S SWEETIE SHALL SIT *JUST* WHEREVER SHE LIKES."

Quarterly Account

"Who had a three-shilling call on the second of January?" said Mr. Caraway, looking up from his correspondence.

"Oh, Lord!" sighed Christopher. "Haven't we been over all that?"

"No, Christopher," said Mrs. Caraway, "you're thinking of the one before, when we had such trouble about the telegram which nobody remembered sending, and we wrote to the post-office."

"But that was only last week or so."

"No, it must have been about the New Year."

"Well, it seems like last week. We're always having to sit here and listen to Father raking up our telephone-calls. Why can't he pay the damned thing instead of——"

"I had a call round about then," said Stephen cautiously.

"Where to?"

"Near Devizes. But it was after seven."

"Did you have to talk to someone near Devizes for nine minutes?"

"Heavens, no! I just said was it all right about the party, and could he bring Michael and Joan and two others up in the car, and he said what did I think he was, and—well, there wasn't much else, really."

"It must have been nine minutes. It says three shillings, and the Post Office doesn't usually make mistakes."

"Then why are we doing all this," asked Christopher, "if it isn't to find mistakes?"



"I'VE GOT A BONE TO PICK WITH THE GARDENING EDITOR."

"It *is* to find mistakes," said his father. "Yours. Who sent a two-and-sevenpenny telegram on the twentieth of January? That can't be right—two-and-sevenpence!"

There was a short silence.

"That must have been the one we sent Tom and Sara when the baby was born," said Stephen. "Was it as long ago as that?" he added, interested.

"I don't care how long ago it was," said Mr. Caraway. "But couldn't you have congratulated them in less than—let's see, nine and twenty-five—thirty-four words?"

"Who said we were congratulating them?" said Christopher. "Besides, they've got an expensive address—The Old Fowl House, or something, Kingston-under-Todd, near Market something, Salop. Then we had to sign it and everything, so there's a shilling gone and nothing said."

"Why didn't you address it to their telephone number?" said Mrs. Caraway.

"What! Think of the risk of a wrong number! A stranger getting that telegram——"

"It certainly was a good telegram," said Stephen. "It took us an hour to write."

"Somebody," went on Mr. Caraway, running his finger along the account, "had a pretty long talk on February the fourth. Six shillings." He looked up. Nothing happened.

"Why, we had that German boy staying with us then," said Mrs. Caraway. The Caraways looked at each other.

"He couldn't have," said Stephen. "Not without telling us."

"Perhaps that's what he was trying to tell us," said Mr. Caraway. "He always had a worried look as if there were something on his mind. What's the German for telephone, by the way?"

"*Fernsprecher*," said Christopher, overacting it a little. "Sorry, Mother."

"Or *Telefon*," said Stephen. "Same as Telephone," he added in a more normal voice.

"I put a money-box there for people to put their telephone-money in," said Mrs. Caraway. "Go and fetch it, Stephen."

"No need to," said Stephen. "There was only sevenpence-halfpenny in it last Thursday."

"How did you do it?" asked Christopher. "Isn't there a sort of flap thing under the slot?"

"You hold that down with a knife and shake."

"Well, I suppose it was Berlin or Frankfurt or somewhere, then, damn the boy," said Mr. Caraway, ticking off the six shillings.

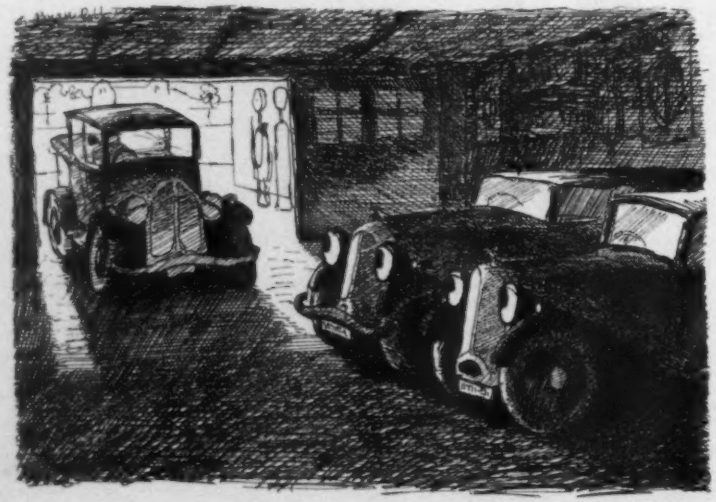
"Turn Ludwig's face to the wall, Mother," said Stephen.

An abstracted look came into Christopher's eyes.

"When did you say it was, Father?" he said casually. "February the fourth?" He thought a bit. "It can't have been *eighteen* minutes. . . Why, all we said——" His voice tailed off.

"Turn Ludwig's face back again, Mother," said Stephen. "And so, at the age of whatever-it-is, with nothing in his pocket except the halves of about forty cinema tickets, young Caraway was flung out into the world to fend for himself. Disgraced, disowned——"

"If only people would write things down," said Mrs. Caraway.



"I'M WORRIED ABOUT GEORGE—HE ALWAYS COMES IN LOOKING SO TIRED."

"All right, all right," said Christopher. "Here's six bob. Stephen, lend me six bob."

"You may as well wait," said Mr. Caraway, "and we'll add it all up at the end. Somebody had two shillings'-worth on the twelfth."

"Wasn't that the day of our party?"

"Oh, yes—Henry had a call to Norfolk, I think," said Stephen.

"Who is Henry?" inquired Mr. Caraway heavily.

"*You* know Henry, Father—the man you didn't like because he would try that balancing-trick with the matchboxes and the sherry-glass."

"Does he have to come here to make his trunk-calls?"

"Not necessarily here, no; but his mother always listens-in on the extension at his place."

"Well, you'll have to pay for your friends, that's all."

"Who will?"

"Whoever it is that Henry's the friend of."

"I loathe him," said Christopher quickly.

"So do I," said Stephen.

"Well, you asked him."

"You said 'Ask Henry.'"

"*You* said 'Shall I ask Henry?' and I said, 'Not if he's going to get tight,' and——"

"Well, he didn't get tight. Anyway——"

"A shilling each then," said Mr. Caraway. "And next time don't ask Henry."

"It's no good not asking him; we've tried that."

"Who had a half-crown talk on March the sixth? That must have been before seven."

"Was that a Saturday?" said Christopher. "Then that was me telling the Turners I couldn't go down for the week-end after all. It was worth half-a-crown."

"Why, but they're charming people," said Mrs. Caraway.

"My dear Mother, a week-end at the Turners' is something between Sunday in a Welsh hotel and an undertakers' temperance convention."

"Don't be ridiculous, Christopher," said Stephen. "As if there could be anything between."

"I suppose it didn't occur to you to tell them earlier and save a little money?"

"You mean later, Father. After seven."

"I mean the night before."

"But I didn't get the invitation for the Campions' party till the Saturday afternoon. So how could I have told the Turners before? Anyway, what's one-and-six? I like the way you grumble about odd shillings," he went on, warming up, "when you went and wasted pounds on that miserable car and then ran it backwards through a shop-window."

"It wasn't a shop-window," said Mr. Caraway. "It was a fruit-barrow, and it hadn't been there a moment before, I'm certain of that, otherwise I wouldn't have hit it."

"Surely it would have to be there before you could hit it, Father," said Stephen.

"Or is this a sort of Bishop Berkeley theory," said Christopher, "requiring your consciousness of the accident before the fruit-barrow can be said to exist?"

"If so," said Stephen, "that must have been one of the shortest fruit-barrow existences on record."

"I mean I'd have missed it if I'd *known* it was there, of course," said Mr. Caraway.

"If you'd known and tried to hit it, you mean?" said Stephen.

Mrs. Caraway glanced at the clock. "I'm sure it's time somebody asked what the time was and rushed out of the room," she said.

"Before anyone does that," said Mr. Caraway, "there's a little matter of four telegrams on March the fifteenth . . ."

"ANIMAL BOOKS FOR BURMA."
Daily Paper.

It only came over for the Coronation.



"NO, DON'T BOTHER TO GET THE CAR OUT. I'VE BEEN LOOKING FORWARD TO THE WALK HOME ALL THE EVENING."

Mr. Silvertop's Retiring Client

OUTSIDE, in Mr. Silvertop's small garden, a pale sun gleamed coldly on the first shoots of spring. Inside, in his workshop, the stove burned bravely and the air was pleasantly charged with the scents of sawdust and strong tobacco.

"Mr. 'Ugglestrap'll be a-coming out any day now," he remarked suddenly.

"Dartmoor?" I asked.

"No, voluntairy 'ibernation," he said. "A rum do, if you like. 'E's an elderly gent, Mr. 'Ugglestrap is, very fond of reading, with enough in the bank not to 'ave to work. But I've always liked 'im.

"I've seen to 'is odd repairs for a long time now. One blazing-'ot day last summer—I should 'ave said the only blazing-'ot day last summer—'e sends for me and 'e ses, 'Silvertop,' 'e ses, ''as it ever struck you as 'ow this royal throne of kings, this septic isle, is rapidly becoming unin'abitable in the winter months?' That's the sort of way 'e often talks. 'Meaning England, Mr. 'Ugglestrap?' I asks. 'The same,' 'e ses. 'I can't say I 'ave,' I admits, 'but now I comes to think of it, it's a fact.'

"'Course it is,' 'e ses. 'I've been a-telling the Government till I'm tired that if they 'ad a scrap of reel feeling for the 'ealth of the people they'd cover the 'ole perishing place with a big tarpaulin from October to April and shift the popoolation out to one of them empty Dominions they're always a-talking about. Time and again I've asked 'em what the 'ell's the good of going on pretending the climate's 'otsy-totsy when under a microscope you can't tell the difference between ripe Stilton and a slice of winter, what you can't 'ardly 'ope to survive without you wear a poomonia-jacket and goloshes and a fur-coat and gargle every ten minutes. But they won't listen to me, and so I'm a-going to look after myself. For the future I'm a-going to dodge the winter, Silvertop.'

"'This 'ardly seems the day for worrying about the winter,' I ses, mopping my brow.

"'On the contrairy,' 'e ses, 'it's the perfect day, seeing you can do it without getting the shivers.'

"'Well,' I asks, ''ow do you mean to set about it? One of them cruises?'

"'I've played with that notion,' 'e answers, 'and I've played with the notion of just going to bed with a nice wood fire in the room at the end of summer and staying there till the spring. They both sounds good, but there's a fatal objection to both of 'em. I don't only want to dodge this 'ere open drain what goes by the polite name of a winter, Silvertop, I wants six months' reel solitood.'

"'But why?' I objects. 'You're a bachelor.'

"'That's got nothing to do with it,' 'e ses. 'My life's nothing but a ruddy martyrdom being followed about by maids asking what I wants to eat and what I wants to wear and will I please come and answer the blistering telephone. Them explorers 'oo gets left be'ind for months by their pals so they can get a better dekko at things always strikes me as the luckiest blokes in creation if only they didn't get left be'ind in such 'ellish uncomfortable places, and if the crate marked "Tobacco" didn't generally seem to turn out brown boot-polish and the paraffin-tank didn't always spring a leak soon as the other blokes is out of sight. No, what I wants is the same cast-iron solitood what they gets *plus* all the comforts what they doesn't get.'

"'And 'ow, if I might ask,' I ses, 'are you a-going to manage it?'

"'I've got it all planned,' 'e ses, 'and you're to 'elp me, Silvertop.' A wild sort of gleam comes into 'is eye. 'I'm a-going into reel 'ibernation, beyond recall till mossy-fingered Spring brings 'er first verdant blush to the twigs!' That's what 'e ses, word for word! 'I'm a-going where time 'as no meaning, where the poytry of life is punkchooated only by the desire to sleep, smoke, eat, drink, read and work the signals for trains of thought carrying rich freights after my own 'eart. You think I'm potty, Silvertop, but I'm a-going to 'ave peace. *Reel* peace!'

"'Very nice, Mr. 'Ugglestrap,' I ses, 'but where?'

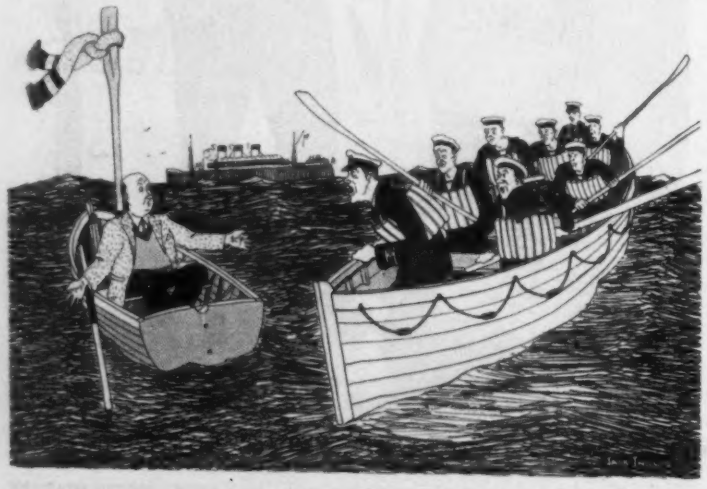
"''Ere!' 'e ses—we was standing in the back-garden—'just to the north-east of them marrow-beds.' 'E takes a droring out of 'is pocket. 'In this,' 'e ses, and 'e 'ands it to me.

"'It looks like Battersea Power Station,' I tells 'im. 'What the 'ell is it?'

"'It's the 'ibernorium I'm a-going to build,' 'e ses, proud-like. 'We'll 'ave it in concrete, I think. That there's the door. That bulge in the wall's one of them patent fans for sponging and pressing the air. That there's a revolving periscope what'll show me 'ow the seasons is getting on, and that's a thermometer by it. Apart from the fan, the 'ole caboodle's 'ermetically sealed once the door's shut. There's one room, apart from the little bathroom-kitchen, and it'll be as comfy as I know 'ow to make it. A sunray lamp'll keep me fit and a floodlight playing different colours on the ceiling'll keep me gay. Everything's electric, and to be safe I'll lodge a big deposit with the company afore I goes in. And there's room round the walls for as much tinned food as I can eat, a cabinet of cigars, a keg of Irish, and all the books I 'aven't never read.'

"'Suppose you gets ill?' I asks.

"'I'm a-going to let off a maroon once a day, just to show the 'ouse'old I'm all right. But it'll be no good them 'ollering at me, for the 'ibernorium's sound-proof. And to make



"SORRY, BUT I'D RUN RIGHT OUT OF MATCHES."

certain they won't get up to no funny business I'm stretching wires right round and giving out they're live.'

"'Seeing you'll be able to switch on your own night and day,' I ses, 'ow'll you arrange 'em?'

"'I shan't,' 'e ses. 'I'm sick to death of night and day. I'm a-going to try living in months instead. The first I'll sleep, the second I'll eat and drink, I'll think the third, and the fourth I'll read. After that I'll see. And all the time I'll be growing the 'andsomest beard you ever clapped eyes on, like a perishing carpet-brush. Well, Silvertop, I asks you, what's wrong with all that?'

"'Corlumme!' I ses after a bit. 'It's what you might call an 'igh-spirited sort of a notion. I shouldn't be in any 'urry over it.'

"''Urry be 'anged!' 'e cries. 'The builders is coming to start to-morrow and I wants you to check up on that there droring right away.'"

Mr. Silvertop put a match to his pipe and blew out a cloud of smoke which for a second or two hid him altogether.

"Mr. 'Ugglestrap isn't one of these 'ere gents 'oo ses one thing and does another. 'E went into that there 'ibernorium the first of October last and except for 'is evening maroons nothing's been 'eard of 'im since. Queer 'e may be, and I don't deny it," he added, "but there's times when I can see what 'e's after."

I took the hint and left him in solitude. ERIC.



"I KNOW, SIR, BUT YOU DIDN'T HAVE THE CELERY; YOU HAD THE DAFFODILS.'

The Harbinger

WHEN May has blown her trumpets,
And Spring is well begun,
And nights are warm, and crumpets
Give way to Sally Lunn;
When migrant birds have sought us
And white the blackthorn blows,
Euphrosyne, our tortoise,
Extrudes a horny nose.

All cosy in the kitchen
She's slept the winter through,
And if it's dreams she's rich in,
She's had a goodish few—
Of moonlights in Mauritius
And gladsome morns in Greece,
Where life is quite delicious
And all is warmth and peace.

Come forth, delightful creature,
And make a brave carouse;
Observe its latest feature,
Our fine new chicken-house;
Explore the kitchen-garden,
The young spring veges greet;
Some day their hearts will harden,
But now they are a treat.

Not upon broad Hymettus
Nor Tempe's holy ground
Can such agreeable lettuce,
Such tender greens be found.
There in the morn the Maenads
May dance upon the dew,
But here the young broad-bean adds
Enchantment to the view.

Nature, in short, is calling
And breakfast waits. Then go.
The harm you do's appalling,
But do we grudge it? No!
Such trespass needs no pardoner,
And, though it irks him sore,
We'll tell old Giles the gardener
To dashed well grow some more.

When neighbours come to visit
They call you a hard case,
Or ask with sneers, "What is it?"
Or mock your stately pace;
And in the strawberry season
We find them quite distressed
Because they see no reason
Why you should have the best.

For us the springtide's urges
Are dated from the day
When one we love emerges
And makes her joyous way,
Spurred on by promptings inner
And twinges in the knees,
Towards a well-earned dinner
Of choice young cabbages.

Long may you, happy reptile,
Abide in our domain,
And though it's quite well-kept I'll
Replant it all again,
Not with lobelia edges
And fair herbaceous blooms,
But with the tenderest veges,
The tastiest legumes! ALGOL.

At the Pictures

Dougs and Pachyderms

Students of heredity who go to *Jump for Glory* will be in no doubt as to the transmission of certain characteristics in the Douglas Fairbanks family. Not only will they see a Doug junior very like his father in appearance, but a Doug junior who is carrying on the Fairbanks tradition of athleticism. Of the original Doug it used to be said that he advanced in his profession by leaps and bounds; and in the present film the central event, as indeed the title suggests, is a terrific effort on the part of the hero, a cat-burglar: the first jump in order to save his lady-love (whose name curiously enough is *Glory*) from the crook, her husband; and the second jump to prove to the police that, being able to perform such feats, he was a brazen thief and the arrested woman was innocent. But beyond these resemblances Doug junior is not so much a chip of the old block as we could wish, and in this film is consistently unconvincing. But I fancy that that is the author's fault, because everyone is unconvincing, and the end, which is intended to be happy, is the least satisfactory moment of all. The reason is that we know that directly Doug junior, or *Ricky Morgan*, who is lying in bed in hospital, while his *Glory Howard*, now a contented and acquitted widow, is sitting adoringly beside him, is well enough to get up, he will be sentenced to a long stretch for the jewel robberies he had quixotically to confess to. Films seldom end like that.

As I have said, *Jump for Glory* is not of the highest class, but Valerie Hobson, as the heroine, is good, and Alan Dale, as the crook whom she marries (but in real life would not have married), is good also. My old friend George Mozart, whose name is blazoned forth on the screen at the beginning, I could not find at all.

We are very elephant-minded these days, the preliminary steps having been prepared by the three "Babar" books and a more mature and realistic contribution being made now by the film constructed from Kipling's story, *Toomai of the Elephants*, called on the screen *Elephant Boy*. And I personally cannot have too much of this very good thing, for to me the elephant, far more than the lion, is the king of beasts. The lion, no doubt, has splendours and ferocities that make him a creature apart, to be feared and honoured; but you cannot get on intimate terms with the lion, whereas the elephant can become your friend—as Kala-Nag, in the story and in this picture, becomes the friend of little *Toomai*. Whether or no *Toomai* would



LOVE AT FIRST FRIGHT

Ricky Morgan . Douglas Fairbanks, Jun.
Glory Howard . Valerie Hobson

have conversed with him in English, is one question, and another question is, would not so mighty a hunter-to-be have awakened when Kala-Nag stepped over him to go to the elephants' dance?



ELEPHANT FOLK

Toomai of the Elephants . . Sabu
Petersen . . . . . Walter Hudd

But since wherever there's a film there's a question, let us say no more.

The great things about *Elephant Boy* are that it holds the audience from beginning to end, and that there is a plenitude of mammoths in reserve. You see them in captivity, bathing and washing, and you see them, more or less wild, dancing by night, and you see them being cajoled with extraordinary tractability into a stockade. And if you chance to be one of the softer sex, you will, whenever one of the little elephants utters a wistful cry and appears to be fearful of losing its mother, sympathetically gurgle.

Sabu, the Indian boy who plays *Toomai*, could not well be better. Even if he were merely an actor and could not be swung on to an elephant's back, he would suffice; but he seems to be a natural-born mahout too, so that we wonder what his future is going to be. Elephant films, even to elephant fans such as I call myself, could in time become monotonous; and what then? Perhaps—and I hope this is so—Sabu will prefer the mammoth to the movie and behave accordingly. The only other character who matters, after the superb Kala-Nag himself, is Walter Hudd, the *White Sahib*, and all I can say of him is that no sahib ever was whiter.

In the film called *More than a Secretary* once again the opposing qualifications of the two varieties of amanuensis (young and female) are analysed and displayed. In real life, secretaries, who are not always too seductive, arrive at the office at nine and leave at six, having caused few cardiac disturbances to their employers, while rivals are rare; but on the screen there are always two, each beautiful, and they are free for lunch, one being far freer than the other; and in the end the less free secures the boss. And so it will continue.

I have many times had to complain that programmes are often no longer provided in cinema theatres; but even where they are, they are useless during the performance. I now remark that for people who like to know the actresses and actors in the picture it is a pity that the excellent idea of the London Hippodrome, where the programme is printed on transparent paper, legible when held against the light of the stage, is not adopted. E. V. L.

Another Smack for the Medicos

"'I was told this morning that Sir —— is improving,' said the Lord Mayor, 'although he says himself he is entirely in the hands of his doctor.'"—*Daily Paper.*

Spring

(An Ode)

THE Spring is in the air, and I maintain
Too much is heard about the blackbird now:
The daffodil is mentioned once again,
Likewise the blossom on the loaded bough:
Birds, flowers, trees and every lovely thing
Receive the tribute due,
But these are not the only points of Spring—
Let me recall a few.

Toads, for example—this is when they spawn;
And slugs are having fun upon the lawn.
In stream and pond
The frogs are fond,
Small tadpoles dart and jerk
As lively as the lamb
(And are a much more complex piece of work),
But not one poet seems to care a damn.

Now too the newt,
A handsome brute,
Where water-grasses sway,
Unseen, unsung,
Produces young
In quite the nicest way.
See how the male
With crested back and orange-spotted tail,
The nuptial dance performs before his frail,
Which, though of course it is not my concern,
Would not amuse me much;
For these, like lovers on the Grecian Urn
Are mates who never touch.
No earthly joy is here, of arm or leg;
Immaculate she goes, without one kiss,
And in the starwort wraps her little egg;
But KEATS has not a word to say of this.

This is not all.
The weeds
Distribute seeds;
The dandelion, dock and parson's bane
Salute the sun again;
The thistle grows
As freely as the rose,
And counts itself as lovely, I suppose.
Hush!
Blackbird and thrush!
But hush!—should we ignore
Old Mr. A
Next-door?
Happy and good,
He hammers nails and wood
All day;
He, like the birds you love the best,
Is busy at his nest,
But deems the birds a bore.
The horrid snail, as with relentless chew
He gradually carves your cuttings through,
Enjoys the Spring as much as I or you,
And let me add, he is God's creature too.

For all things everywhere
Contribute their due share
To the great symphony of vernal joys.
As in some mighty orchestra is set
Under the stage
A little man,
Secret and sage,
Who, when he can,
Will make a most extraordinary noise,
Scarce heard. None knows his name,
And yet
Without him all would not be quite the same—
So snail and slug and river-rat and toad,
The earwig and the kind of man you meet
Discussing golf,
The humble housewife cleaning her abode,
Painting the garden-seat,
And, I would add, the CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER,
Who must somehow express himself like you,
And thinks it fit at this glad hour to sue
For taxes new,
And we who, older taxes being due,
Keep up our pecker—
All these, as well as daffodil and crocus
And those few birds that sing,
Have some small *locus*
In any composition on the Spring—
And I at least have done the decent thing. A. P. H.



THE FUSE



"GAR—IT DON'T COST ALL THEM MILLIONS TO RUN A NAVY!"

Spot of Maxim Gunning

Now that the tumult and the shouting dyes, like the captains and kings, have departed (not that they have; loyal motley is to be the wear for some time, it appears; but you know how it is with one of those highly perishable jokes), I think something should be done about a minor but pressing problem in the Motto Department. I refer to that much publicised and respected maxim, "Act as though nothing were impossible."

This is credited with an influence no less beneficent than profound. It originally burst, I think, upon America, completely altering the direction of hundreds of thousands of lives all over that long-suffering continent; now it has crossed the Atlantic, changing the outlook of every fish on the way. An article in an evening paper a few weeks ago earnestly described it as a secret of success. It may be that, although one generally has to pay for a secret of success (at a chemist's or a grocer's: one shilling the small size, one-and-six the large size containing twice as much); all I respectfully wish to point out is that it doesn't mean anything. Alternatively, if it means anything, it doesn't mean what everybody seems to think it means; alternatively, if it means what everybody seems to think it means, it also means the opposite. (Mr. Jib Boom, K.C., appeared for the plaintiff; Mr. Olaf N. Grofat, K.C., appeared for the defendant. *Solicitors*: Messrs. Tramp, Tramp, Tramp, Boyse & Marchin; Messrs. Hip, Hip, Hip & Ray. *Ex parte* Common Jurors summoned for Court XXI. need not attend until to-morrow, if then.)

The truth is that the maxim works only for the superficial thinker; him it encourages to action in face of a difficulty which he otherwise might not bother to fight; him it inspires perhaps to say, "Well, let's have a crack at it—anyway, hell, he can't eat me" (as if cannibalism were the ultimate terror). The slightly less superficial thinker, proceeding quite involuntarily to co-ordinate his facts, goes on: "But nothing is impossible—hell, he might eat me after all." So disconcerting a thought would certainly never have entered his head without the help of a piece of advice designed, I am sure, to keep it out.

The flaw, in fact, revealed by the dilemma of our second thinker—a haulage contractor named Roebuck: splendid feller—is that since nothing is impossible we may just as well get ready for the worst as for the best. The odds against the occurrence of something forty-eight degrees worse than normal are no greater than those against the occurrence of something forty-eight degrees better. Telling a pessimist like Roebuck to act as though nothing were impossible is simply inviting him to lie down and die; he knows already that nothing is impossible, and can behave like a rational citizen only when he forgets it. Did he ever tell you about that time when his petrol-tank began to leak beside a night-watchman's fire?

What we may call an offshoot of the Roebuck school of thought is represented for the purposes of this article by a confirmed worrier named Jessop. Jessop, although a little out of breath, continues to think on the same lines as Roebuck. But when he has thought as far as Roebuck did his conclusion is not that nothing can be done or that the maxim has something wrong with it, but that he, Jessop, the thinker, the worrier, is probably going off his head.

In the habit of seeking the reason for everything, good or bad, within himself, he is naturally apt to assume that if he runs in mental circles as the result of paying attention to a maxim of which thousands of people approve, it is because mental circles are what he is congenitally doomed to run in. Jessop's is a sad case, all right.

The maxim itself, however, is what needs attention. Let us get out our little spanner and see what we can do.

Act as though nothing were impossible. Now, broadly speaking, nothing *is* impossible. There *might* be an earthquake before the bill comes in; a passing airship *might* drop us a wad of hundred-pound notes. Therefore the original injunction as delivered is practically meaningless.

Act as though you think nothing is impossible. No use unless you really do think so; and once you really do think so you are in the same boat as Roebuck and Jessop. There you all are in this boat, drifting round and round.

Act as though what you want to happen were about to happen. This effort at first glance has its points. But it undoubtedly puts you on a level, although at a fairly safe distance, with the people who are convinced that tomorrow or the day after, perhaps about lunch-time but preferably at some hour when the rich and sinful are wallowing in dishevelled luxury, will see the Second Coming of the Lord. If you are happy on this level, very well. I'd rather be in the boat.

Act as though——

Tell me—are you sick of the whole thing? I thought so. In fact, for all of us who are not superficial thinkers the problem boils down to: "Is this fashionable maxim, even when not vitiated by analysis, any improvement on 'Hope for the best'?" And for most of us—I hope you will side with the boys and me—the answer boils down, or over, to "No."

Even then there's "The unexpected always happens." But that is another maxim. R. M.

The Barn Dance

"Some soft wheat has gone to France and capers to a variety of destinations."
From a Trade Paper.

For Men About Town

"Lounge Suit in Uncut Moquette

'B——' Make, too well known to need describing. All hair stuffed and distinctly comfortable."—*Furniture Stores Advt.*

Fireproof

["Lots of the models are in the most surprising materials. One dress is in asbestos."—*From an account of the fashion parade at the Ideal Home Exhibition at Olympia.*]

Asbestos-gowned, the modern modest dame
May walk abroad from early dawn to dark
Secure from molestation by old flame
Or gay young spark.

The Actors' Benevolent Fund is in great need of money for actors and actresses in distress through illness, old age or unemployment. Mr. Punch hopes therefore that there will be a big attendance at the Ball in aid of the Fund which will be held at Grosvenor House on Wednesday, July 14th. Tickets (2 guineas each, including champagne supper and cabaret) may be obtained from Miss Adeline Bourne, 6A, Blomfield Road, W.9.

"She lit a cigarette and puffed it through her little freckled nose."—*Novel.*

"It fell to earth, I know not where."



"Certainly, Charles, the further away one is the better one likes it."
"Well, let's go *right* away and have some tea."



"CAN I INTEREST YOU IN OUR POST-CORONATION FLANNEL TROUSERS, SIR? MADE SPECIALLY FOR GENTLEMEN TO RELAX IN."

A Mother's Ode to Duty

HERE is my bag, my white suède gloves,
  Hopkins has laid my cloak across the chair,
And overhead, cooing like little doves,
  The débutantes are tidying their hair.

The dinner on the whole went very well,
  Edward produced some splendid bad champagne.
A pity, though, that Gloria's Christabel
  Should be both deaf and dumb as well as plain.

Ah me, my lovely bottles in a row,
  My shaggy rug, the gleaming washhandstand,
Alas! my jaegar slippers, I must go
  To sit till dawn beside a booming band.

Hopkins, the bed must really *not* be turned;
  Not only is it ugly but its charms
Are overwhelming, since they must be spurned
  For colder comfort in another's arms.

There now, a little scent behind the ears,
  A last tug at this most expensive dress,
And I am ready, gaunt with anguished fears
  Lest darling Jane may not prove a success.

Custom decrees that while my daughter dances
  I should be eating quail which taste like mice;
Thus I have not the slenderest of chances
  Of guarding her from various forms of vice.

Sometimes at half-past three I wonder whether,
  Having not seen the child since ten-past one,
Mothers could not in one fell swoop together
  Decide that chaperoning "isn't done."

Often, when I am sitting by the wall,
  Or hopping round the room with some old beau,
I look with eyes that do not see at all
  Upon the faces of the friends I know.

But rather do I see with inward eye,
  Hanging suspended o'er my partner's head
As in a glorious mirage, the vision of my
  Hot-water bottle in its coat of red.

* * * * *

Here is my evening bag, my white suède gloves;
  We shall see London by the rising sun;
Ah, but my homely joys, my dearest loves,
  How I will run to you when duty's done! V. G.



THE GLORIOUS EXCEPTIONS

GREGORIO MUSSOLINI. "NON ANGLI, SED ANGELI."

[It appears that the only English newspapers now admitted to Italy are those in which the opinions of Lord ROTHERMERE and Mr. GARVIN prevail.]



"I REGRET THAT I AM NOT IN A POSITION TO MAKE A STATEMENT."

Women Without Men

GENERALISING is a dangerous pastime, and generalisations about men as men, and women as women, represent the *fine fleur* of its folly. But when the will to indulge in it becomes too strong for you and you feel you must generalise or bust, then I suggest the following as being a slightly safer one than most: namely that, at dinner-parties, the time when the ladies are in the drawing-room and the gentlemen are finishing their port is for men one of the most enjoyable parts of the evening and for women simple hell.

The custom (a relic of the days when men got disgustingly drunk, slid under the table and were there saved from apoplexy by the ministrations of page-boys) is a barbarous one and has been abandoned in most civilised countries. But in England, unhappily, it still obtains. I have made a careful study of the look which hostesses give their husbands when they go past them out of the dining-room. Almost always the expression is one of intense and rueful pleading, streaked in some cases with menace. Expanded, it says quite plainly, "For *God's* sake, darling, don't be all night." And almost always it is answered by a non-committal and quite unrepentant smile. The other women dread the ordeal as much—or almost as much—as the hostess, but they know that no glance of theirs can influence the situation; so up they all go, wearing their invisible yashmaks with a bad grace.

The facts are undeniable; but the inference usually drawn from them—that women cannot get on socially with other women—is false. Go to any restaurant in the middle of the day and you will see women lunching together in groups of any size from two to twenty, laughing and talking, completely at ease with each other. There is no magic in luncheon as opposed to dinner, or in restaurants as opposed to private houses. Why, then, are these feminine after-dinner sessions at the best insipid and at the worst acutely embarrassing?

The main reason, I think, is that the time factor is so uncertain. The length of the session is entirely in the men's hands. Whenever they happen to finish their port or their conversation they will come upstairs—it may be in twenty minutes, it may be in an hour and twenty; and the moment the door opens to admit them the women's party will be arbitrarily brought to an end; conversations must be broken off in mid-air and places changed to allow for the neat alternation of the sexes which convention (that hardened old patience-player) insists upon.

For the women, then, it is scarcely worth while embarking on any subject which is likely to lead to prolonged and interesting discussion. The talk therefore perches and flits, birdlike. I would not mind betting that if the men left the dining-room and took their port upstairs and the women were free to lean their elbows on the table and get down to brass tacks without fear of interruption, matters would take a very different turn.

But there is, to be honest, another reason. At the dinner-table, even though they are arranged alternately, men and women are at liberty to forget that they are anything but human beings; consequently there is a strong chance that they will be at their best. But at a given moment it is the duty of the hostess, Circe-like, with a complex wave of her eye, to transform these reasonable people (herself included) into two groups of animals by the mere process of suddenly and pointedly separating them. Now, never having been present at an all-male

gathering, I cannot tell what kind of animal men turn into when abruptly left alone: tigers, perhaps; bulls, apes or bears; or, for all I know, wart-hogs. Or perhaps, since they have been allowed to behave like human beings far longer than women have, they do not so easily revert, especially as they are at least left in comfortable and dignified command of the situation. But the women, cast out, herded upstairs and immediately sent about the biological business of powdering their noses—the women (I can vouch for it) go completely to pieces. They have become sub-human before they reach the half-landing; and by the time they set foot in the drawing-room Circe's work is finished. Set foot is hardly the word: set hoof, rather, or set paw. For there is unfortunately little need to ask what animals women turn into when they are too suddenly segregated. Broadly speaking, they become either cats or cows.

There are exceptions, of course: an occasional trend towards the horse, especially among county families; a few rather engaging dormice; you yourself, I am quite willing to believe, turn into an elegant milk-white gazelle; and I once had the misfortune to run across a black mamba. But on the whole, yes, cats or cows: there is no getting away from it. And within five minutes the same creatures who at dinner were talking more or less intelligently about world affairs and the quantum theory are engaged in one of two occupations—chewing the cud or sharpening the claws. Domesticities or gossip: there seems to be no other choice. In one corner, two of them, mothers of contemporary children, are exchanging in a low moo maternal platitudes. (Even their jargon is scarcely human. "*How are your infants?*" "*Flourishing.*" "*My small boy . . .*") From another there comes a soft malicious purring; two more of them have discovered acquaintances in common and are ecstatically kneading bread as they pull them to pieces. ("*Is she a friend of yours?*" "*Well, I've known her a long time . . .*") A third pair contains one of each species, so they have chosen the servant problem, a subject which gives equal scope for mooing and miaowing.

If there was more time, or even if one knew just how much time there was, it might be possible for a strong-minded hostess to break the spell and turn herself and her guests into human beings again. But as things are she can only keep an eye uselessly on the clock and pray—either to Hathor or to Bubastis, according to her nature. And when at last the men come up, her relief at seeing them is almost spoilt by her annoyance at feeling relieved. As a rule they seem quite unconscious that they have been a long time: which is bad enough. But sometimes they apologise for it, which is worse. For how is one to reply without pandering to the arrogance which the apology reveals? How, without being a traitor to one's sex, is one to explain about Circe?

JAN.



"GOOD LOR', MAN, TAKE YOUR HAT OFF."
"WHY?"
"WELL, ACCORDING TO MY RECKONING WE'RE INSIDE WESTMINSTER ABBEY!"

Maid Wanted

DAUGHTER of blacksmith. Self-starter. Fond of housework, invisible mending, *broderie anglaise*. Light step. Untrained contralto. Berkshire accent. Working knowledge Javanese cooking an advantage. Own friends, correspondents, hats. Domestic science degree deprecated, science or arts considered. Appearance: complexion and smile average to good. Paquin or equal apprenticeship distinct advantage, ditto hairdressing and manicure. Experienced masseuse. Good with animals and china. Unwilling discuss funerals, operations, hospitals. *Fiancé* plumber no bar. Hours flexible. References recording placing of newly-filled hot-water-bottles on polished table-tops disqualifies. Wages by arrangement. Stamped addressed envelope for reply.

"TRAMP TO WORK ON THIRD DAY OF BIG 'BUS STRIKE."
Scots Paper.

What good could he do?



THE BRITISH CHARACTER

ENJOYMENT OF CLUB LIFE

Bogey

WHEN in my youth the craze for golf attacked me
Ample I found the mashie and a cleek;
What did I care though everybody whacked me—
I had no caddie there with tongue in cheek.
Gaily the divots flew in all directions,
Lightly I laughed (ye gods!) upon the stroke;
Jests hardly tactful drew fierce interjections
When my opponent's cherished driver broke.
Bunkers amused me as my club I grounded;
Oh, how I swanked at holes done under ten
With a contempt for all the rules unbounded!
I was a carefree young beginner then.

Then came the day—my friends had cause to rue it—
When I aspired the true technique to learn,
Eagerly watched the great performers do it,
Modelled my style upon them each in turn.
Strokes I had played formed all my conversation
Till soon I lost the trusty friends of yore,
And to my caddies' bitter indignation
Loaded my bag with useless clubs galore.
Slowly I found my disposition sunny
Changing to hatred of my fellow-men;
Gone were the days when every round was funny.
I was a rabid golfing maniac then.

Now with another antiquated fogey
Slowly in gloom I totter round the course,
Cursing with vim when fourteen down to bogey,
Holding up everyone without remorse;
Stopping at frequent intervals to query
Interpretation of a local rule,
Finally seeking solace for my weary
Frame at the bar upon a welcome stool.
There, after many a generous libation,
Tales I retell to inattentive ears—
Tales of my all-too-bubble reputation.
I was a plus-man once in bygone years.

At the Play

"SARAH SIMPLE" (GARRICK)

Sarah Simple is the name of the piece and its author is A. A. MILNE, with his great gifts for lucidity and his comprehensibility by the very young, so we are not surprised when at the very beginning all the cards are placed by the dramatist on the table where we can see them. There is *William Bendish* (Mr. A. R. WHATMORE), the sort of man over whom possessive women fight. If he is testy he is obviously good-natured, and if he is indolent it does not much matter, for he invented as an undergraduate a corkscrew or a mousetrap—his womenfolk are content to be vague on the point—and has lived in modest country comfort ever since.

For this body the contending women meet in Act I. to do battle, and very unevenly matched they are. *Sarah* (Miss LEONORA CORBETT), from her first surprise entrance, has all the military advantages. She is mobile, patient and already deeply entrenched, having been married to *William* some nine years before and having been separated, but not divorced, for the last eight. As Miss CORBETT plays her she is at once an attractive and a capable woman, with her own hat-shop in New York. She has all the assurance of a young woman in business, but she is restless and both surprised and pleased to find her first husband still available. The only obstacle is *Marianne Bell-Mason* (Miss AGNES LAUGHLAN), a Canon's widow to whom *William* is unaccountably attached, and the first two Acts of the play run very lightly, playing round *Mrs. Bell-Mason* and her county prejudices as the skirmishing for position takes place.

I overheard two American dramatists discussing the play in the first interval. They had to admit that the audience had been laughing, for indeed it had, but they condemned the play for having no real situation since it was obvious to everybody that *Sarah* was going to regain her husband. The opposition, in the person of *Mrs. Bell-Mason*, had been made amusing at the expense of being interesting. If *Marianne* had been a little less of a Canon's widow we might have felt a real uncertainty. But what annoyed the American dramatists was that the play was not even going to end in a marriage, since the marriage had taken place nine years before the curtain went up; but they—and all of us—reckoned without the Third Act, when Mr. MILNE plays his trump. It takes place in the "Rose and Crown," and we think the addiction to detective stories of the old dyspeptic waiter, *Charles*, brilliantly played by Mr. FREDERICK PIPER, is merely additional broad comedy. There we are much deceived. The detective stories have a great part to play, for they wreck *Sarah's* scheme by gripping *William* at a critical moment, and the comedy which has at moments been a placid stream, carrying along on its surface little paper-boats of epigram and repartee, suddenly produces a rich situation. The scene in the "Rose and Crown" is not the end. Such a play must end happily, but it is a triumphant vindication of literature as a real power in human life.



THE CUCKOO IN THE LOVE-NEST

Sarah . . . . . MISS LEONORA CORBETT
Marianne Bell-Mason . . . MISS AGNES LAUGHLAN



MURDER MYSTERIES AND "MASSIDINE"

Charles . . . . . MR. FREDERICK PIPER
William Bendish . . . MR. A. R. WHATMORE

Miss CORBETT, unlike the other actors and actresses, has a satisfying part with a great range of moods, and her talent enjoys full scope. She is supported by character-studies which are all well done within their limits, and Mr. MILNE is to be congratulated for the character of *Altruda Bendish* (Miss BERYL LAVERICK), a little girl wholly devoted to her brother, *Amyas*, a more familiar type of schoolboy horror. The measure of Mr. MILNE's skill in this field can be realised when it is said that he is one of the few dramatists who can insert obviously detachable epigrams into his dialogue; and while it would be an exaggeration to say that the ear is not startled, these bright verbal intruders soon establish themselves as welcome guests and the audience enjoys them to the full. But young dramatists whose idea of a play is to build up little situations round phrases and scraps of dialogue must be warned that it requires the deftest of master-hands to attempt and carry off such liberties.

D. W.

At the Revue

"WONDERFUL WORLD" (VICTORIA PALACE)

As a "Coronation Revue" this confines itself, not unmercifully, to a

sentimental little *Forsyte-Cavalcade* act in which, preceded by the right kind of song and supported by the right shape of butler, an old lady who has doddered girl and woman through a number of reigns entertains her grandchildren to watch the Coronation procession from her balcony. The chief merits of the sketch lie in the opportunity it gives us of observing with how much dignity Miss FLORENCE DESMOND will enter on her ninth decade, and in the fact that, after so much talk about the Coronation, she forgets altogether to look at the procession.

The poles of the revue are two exceedingly bad sketches on the one hand and Miss DESMOND, who is brilliant, on the other; between them is some very fair stuff. But no programme could profitably include these sketches. I am not sure which of them demands the blue-pencil more, the one dealing with the American chambermaid's seduction-technique or the one based, with even more audacity and optimism, on the ancient device of coupling a conversation with advertising-slogans.

Miss DESMOND, however, is at the top of her form with her impersonations, conjuring up the stars of stage and screen in voice and person. The last of these tricks is to me always the more surprising, because one has learned to accept Miss DESMOND as a magic repository of all the voices; but I still find it a little staggering when she turns into the DIETRICH before my very eyes. Her CICELY COURTNEIDGE is equally good, and her GARBO and BERGNER run it close. She comes nearest to mediocrity with her COWARD. But in most of these portraits, as indeed in almost all her comic work, there is a finely-tempered edge of impish burlesque which puts her beyond question in the first class.

The song with which she opens the revue is a garbled version of "A. P. H.'s" song which she made famous, "A British Mother's Big Flight," but the programme lacks an acknowledgment of its source or author. In addition she gives an amusing parody of strip-tease dancing, and as a member of a band which has already proved its talent without her, the TALO BOYS, she demonstrates the gap which separates the modern music-hall acrobat from her Victorian sister. On this evidence it is a wide one. The TALO BOYS stick on tremendous moustaches, she appears in a pink costume whose unsuitability is a work of genius, and each little act, doomed to failure, is preceded by an outbreak of courtesies between her and the head-BOY. Once or twice the men of muscle succeed in getting her off the ground, but their technique is utterly unreliable.



STAR-TEASING
MISS FLORENCE DESMOND



PAUL REMOS AND HIS WONDER TOYS
(IF YOU DON'T BELIEVE US, GO AND SEE THEM.)

After these I liked the broadcast turn in which Mr. STEVE GERAY and Mr. HUGH DEMPSTER show from what different angles an Italian and an Englishman can comment on a boxing-match in which their two countries are represented. The Englishman is almost too bored to pass on even the information that his champion has been bitten in the ear, while the Italian nearly dissolves the microphone in a hot spate of language, punctuated only by the phrase "Beautiful beautiful veemen!" I cannot say to how many words a minute Mr. GERAY works up, but it occurred to me that in Italy stenographers must be a special race of women.

He makes a very pleasant compère.

The WONDER TOYS OF PAUL REMOS are either little boys of about four or else midgets who have retained an appearance of extreme youth. Whatever their age they are so minute that they make their entry in small kit-bags, and they execute all kinds of acrobatics which their stature makes impressive.

The cream of the evening's dancing comes from WILSON and KEPPEL, a pair of very thin, very grave and very active young men who are as funny as they are agile. They are dressed as slaves of CLEOPATRA, and their rapid steps up and down a staircase are worth watching closely.

About the comic merits of ETHEL REVNELL and GRACIE WEST, a pair well known to wireless listeners, I am undecided. REVNELL has a distinct personality, and up to a point they are funny; but they seem to reach their limit rather soon.

No notice of this revue would be complete without a special mention of the backcloths, all, I think, the work of Mr. WALTER TRIER, and much above the average. ERIC.

This Week's Opportunity

"For Sale, collector's specimens, including rare mutton-fat."—*Advt. in Daily Paper.*

Pugilistic Piecework

THERE is no doubt that the last few months have seen a marked revival in the prestige of British boxing. Now that Mr. FARR from Wales and Mr. DOYLE from Ireland and Mr. LYNCH from Scotland have all beaten gentlemen from America whom we were assured were going to eat them alive, we Englishmen are entitled to hold our heads a little higher.

I was a little perturbed, however, to hear that somebody had offered Mr. DOYLE a pound for every time he hit his opponent with his left hand. Apparently the sportsman who has made the offer believes that by greater use of the old straight left British boxing may be revived. Now let me say at once that I am all in favour of anything which will revive British boxing—indeed of anything which will encourage either contestant in the average heavyweight fight to hit the other man with *either* hand. I don't care whether it is a straight left or a devious right. Anything which will make people box instead of encouraging them to lie affectionately in each other's arms while sixteen seconds and a trainer in one corner and fifteen seconds and a trainer in the other clamour that their man has been fouled, seems to me an advance. Nevertheless I cannot help feeling that the pound-a-straight-left idea is hardly the logical way of doing it. Because—

(1) As an incentive it seems slightly beside the point. At first glance I imagined that boxing had at last had a rush of business acumen to the head and that Mr. DOYLE was to be paid purely on results. But apparently this is not so. He was still to be paid the usual five pounds a second which is normal for large and colourful young men who make brief appearances in our rings, *i.e.*, he was already being handsomely paid to hit the other man anyway. The pound business was simply a small bonus.

(2) Usually the bonus could hardly amount to enough to be worth while. I understand that Mr. DOYLE earned several hundred pounds, and Mr. FARR would have done pretty well on the same basis. But a friend of mine who has seen most heavyweight fights in the last few years tells me that if the bonus had been operative in all of them the total would have been about one pound three-and-sevenpence, which is very little.

(3) It might conceivably alter the whole idea of the fight. Supposing—just supposing—Boxer X catches Boxer Y with his right hand or the ring bucket or something in the first minute and reduces him to a point where one reasonable biff will knock him out and finish the affair, will he do it? Scarcely. If Boxer X is a business man he will reflect that so far he hasn't earned a penny of bonus. Rather he will prop Boxer Y up in a corner and continue to tap out pounds indefinitely with a gentle and cherishing left hand, like a waiting taxi or a professional billiards player scoring anchor cannons, which will be dooced dull and hardly in the TOM SAYERS tradition.

I therefore feel that whilst the fundamental idea is sound it needs thoughtful amplification and modification before it will really give results in practice. Accordingly I propose to write to the British Boxing Board of Control suggesting my Flexible Purse System for future heavyweight fights. The following are its main features:—

(1) When the fight starts the purse is empty. What there is in it at the end depends entirely upon what happens during the fight. And when I say during the fight I mean during the *fight*. There is no unearned increment for dazzling dressing-gowns or graceful bows. Boxers can wear the one and make the other if they like, and it doesn't cost them anything. But it doesn't cost the audience anything either.

(2) The fight therefore is on a strict piecework basis. I haven't worked out all the details, but if we take a shilling a straight left (*landed*) as our basis it might work out something like this:—

Left hook, 1/-.
Left swing, 6*d*.
Right cross, 9*d*.
Right uppercut, 9*d*.
Blood (opponent's), 1/- a pint.
Blood (opponent's, Grade A), 1/2 a pint.
Black eye (opponent's), 2/-.

Modern "in-fighting" (*i.e.*, patting back of opponent's head with open glove; scrubbing at opponent's eyes with laces; butting opponent with head; poking at opponent's shoulder-blades, etc.), 6*d*. an hour and lucky to get it.

Knocking opponent down, £1 a second of count.

Knocking out opponent (without use of head, elbows, knees or ring-posts, and not when the referee is intervening and he has his hands down), £10 down and balance over fifty months.

(3) On the other hand, there will be a definite scale of *charges* for uselessness and general awfulness, *e.g.*:—

Waltzing with opponent: Usual dance-hall charge, a shilling a go.

Sitting on the ropes: 1*d*. a time, as in Park.

Writhing without reasonable cause: 30/- a month for making a false statement.

Having more than four seconds: £1 for causing a crowd to collect.

"Skilful defensive fighting" (*i.e.*, getting your opponent's gloves under your arms, leaning on him and looking innocently and appealingly at the referee): £5 for swindling.

"Fighting on the retreat" (*i.e.*, eternally backing round and round the ring): 1/11¾ a yard,

and so on.

You see how it would work? One or two odd people to whom I have showed the scheme complain that the actual purses paid out would be rather small. But I have roughed out the financial results of the last three big fights I have seen on this basis and they run like this:—

Blank *v.* Dash: Purse, £1 12*s*. 6*d*.
John Doe *v.* Richard Roe: Purse, 17*s*. 3*d*.
Rex *v.* Another: Owed us £5.

And when I tell you that the total actually paid out to these colourful lads was just over £8,000, I think you'll agree that even if my system isn't perfect it's nearer to sense than the present one. Particularly if you happen to have bought a two-guinea seat for that historic slow tango between Rex and Another.



"IF IT WASN'T FOR PEOPLE LIKE YOU THERE WOULDN'T BE A WAR IN SPAIN."



"How would you like it cut, Sonny?"
"Like Grandad's, with a hole in the middle."

Farewell to Fun

I was finished off in Munich and I had a week in Rome
On my way from gay Vienna, *viâ* Florence, to my home.
I am quite sophisticated, and I think you will agree
That I've got the polished glamour of a girl of twenty-three.
So you see it won't be easy to become a child once more,
But I've got to be a débutante, which is a frightful bore.

I'm seventeen next Wednesday week, and on that fateful day
My fond mamma will give a ball to start me on my way.
I've got a dozen party-frocks in which to play the part;
All of them are white, of course, and none of them are smart.
So I'll have to give up lipstick and red varnish on my nails
And put away my cigarettes and brown Bavarian ales.

How shall I answer, when I'm asked by infants in the Guards
What pack I hunt with when I hunt and whether I play cards?
And will I join a jolly crowd at Eton on the Fourth?
And if, when August days are come, I'm going to the North?
Oh for the days of discussion with Hans and Franz and Paul
On Life and Love and Music and Should We Marry at All!

So say good-bye to Munich,
Vienna days are done.
Forget the fun in Florence,
For work has now begun. J. G.

Ask the Young

"I ADORE the new car, but I think it's a terribly difficult number to remember."

The remark—light-heartedly made—was prompted by a rather unfortunate little episode, when the fishmonger had inquired, Should he send it round to the car-park, Madam, and if so, what was the car-number?

And answer came there none, unless it was an answer to say that we hadn't had the car very long and I couldn't for the life of me remember.

In the end one took the fish in a carrier and it accompanied one, *viâ* the chemist, the fruiterer, the dentist, and the tea-party at the Deanery, to a small blue car, which turned out to be called BXH 472.

Of course! I knew it all the time.

Nevertheless something told me that it wasn't *really* fixed in my memory and that I was going to forget it again.

So then it was that I said, "I adore the new car, but I think it's a terribly difficult number to remember," without the slightest idea that I was, with this simple phrase, practically sowing the wind to reap the whirlwind.

"Difficult to *remember*!" said the younger members of the party with one voice.

"Mummie, it's frightfully easy! BXH is practically Box Hill. That's how *I* always remember. Or it *could* be Bah if only it was an A in the middle. Or Boh if it was an O. Boh would be marvellous!"

"*Nothing* is as easy as Laura's car—CYH. Jennifer discovered that. Car You Have."

"Wouldn't it be marvellous," carolled another irresponsible young voice, "if somebody had a car with BOSH on it? They might, you know."

"There aren't any cars with four letters on them yet," said three other voices simultaneously.



"YOU KNOW HOW PARTICULAR THE THISTLEWHISTLES ARE."

"Well," I said, "I daresay I shall remember next time that if only the car number was BOH it would only need an S to make it into BOSH, which is quite easy; but I still don't see how I'm to remember 472."

"Neither do I," said Laura, supporting me. "There's absolutely nothing to take hold of in a number like 472. It isn't like Whitehall 1212."

We all agreed that it wasn't a bit.

"Though I suppose," Laura added modestly, "one couldn't really *expect* to have a car called Whitehall 1212."

"It couldn't be Whitehall anyway. It couldn't even be WHI yet," was pointed out to her.

"Oh dear!" said Laura, looking discouraged.

"Once," said my youngest, in the tone of one looking back across the ages—"once I saw a man in the village's car that was called TT 2213."

"How marvellous!" said all the others in chorus.

"And how did you remember that?" I asked.

"Oh, it was frightfully easy. You see, there was a 2 and a 2, and if 1 and 3 are averaged they'd come to 2, wouldn't they?"

I was stricken dumb.

"And how about the TT?" asked Laura in an awed voice.

"Oh, that's *fearfully* easy! You see, T is the same as T, so the minute you remember one you've only got to remember that the other is the same."

"I see," said Laura—not, I think, very truthfully.



"ANY TIME YOU CAN'T FIND ME, MA'AM, JUST POP YER 'EAD IN THE 'RED LION' AND YELL 'OI, GINGER!' "



Freeborn Briton. "WHY ON EARTH DON'T YOU KEEP TO YOUR RIGHT? CAN'T YOU READ THE NOTICE TELLING YOU TO KEEP TO YOUR LEFT?"

"Mummie," said a voice—not yet broken—from one of those Great Public Schools of ours that is so busy making England what it was yesterday—"Mummie, shall I tell you *exactly* how to remember that the car's number is BXH 472?"

A mother knows her cue.

"Yes, please do," I said.

"It's——"

"I know that bit. 'It's *frightfully* easy.' Go on."

"Well, it *is* frightfully easy. It's a systematic method."

("Good!" said Laura under her breath.)

"The whole number-plate has got to be reduced to figures for the sake of mathematical lucidity. BXH 472 becomes 2248472, and to remember which of these numbers are letters the number must be divided into two halves—into which it very luckily falls naturally. Or an even better method would be to reduce the expression to chiasmatic symmetry."

"Me for chiasmatic symmetry *every* time," said Laura enthusiastically.

In silencing her with a rather severe look, I missed a good deal of the next bit. Besides, I was getting slightly dazed.

When my faculties had cleared we had left chiasmatic symmetry behind and gone on to the letters.

"First, you notice that the first three digits add up to 12. Second, you rearrange the digits so as to have them in ascending order of magnitude, making 237. Then you know that the number 237 will tell you the letters."

"But will it tell me in simple words that I can understand quite easily?" Laura asked wistfully.

I again frowned at her.

"It's splendid, darling," I said with that ready duplicity that a wife and mother learns to practise so freely. "The only thing is, even when I've done what you said about the chiasmas and everything, I'm not absolutely certain that I shall quite remember the order of the figures—I mean the original 472."

"Mummie! That's *frightfully* easy. Just remember that the difference between the first two digits—7 and 4=3—is one more than the third digit, just as two digits are greater in number than one digit by 1."

"Almost *too* easy," said Laura. "Is that all?"

"There *is* another way—it's frightfully easy too, really—but I'm afraid it's a tiny bit complicated to explain."

With one accord Laura and I said that we would wait until after tea.

"Oh," said the instructor, and added in quite a young voice: "Will there be anchovy toast?" E. M. D.

R.S.V.P.

I OUGHT to write to Dorothy,
I ought to write to Jim;
Uncle asked me down to stay,
I ought to write to him;
I ought to write to Auntie Maud
And Barbara and Fred.
What a lot of letters!
I think I'll go to bed. M. H.

The Case of the Captain's Laundry

"This incident caused the captain to be on the bridge for two days without any vest and the 'Aquitania' was delayed for sixty hours in Montevideo."—*Trinidad Paper.*

"8: The Music Lovers' Hour, featuring Schubert, Scherzo, Dvorak and Wagner."
Radio Programme in Australian Paper.

And next week we hope poor old Pizzicato got his turn.



"Oh—er—pardon me."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

The Romance of Clydeside

The Clyde, as compared with the Thames, has had few historians. That is not to say, however, that the raw material of history is not present, as Mr. George Blake, who tells the tale—not untempered by patriotic pride—of its rise to commercial greatness very effectively demonstrates in his book, *Down to the Sea* (Collins, 12/6). A few of his chapters deal with the era of sail, but these are in the minority. As a small boy he recalls seeing the *Lusitania* go down to the sea, and it is still with the Clyde as the cradle of the steamship that he is principally concerned. The story as he tells it of the development of steam in general and of the importance of the Clyde in particular, from the days of the *Comet* to those of the *Queen Mary*, is an epic one, demonstrating as it does the triumph of human determination, perseverance and dour endeavour. Even the river itself, as a commercial highway, owes, as Mr. Blake points out, much of its position to the ingenuity of man, and that part of the book which deals with the operations that resulted in putting Glasgow on the map as a seaport is not the least interesting in a fascinating and readable chronicle. "Sandy has been building ships for a long, long time" are the words with which Mr. Blake's volume closes; and in his opinion Sandy and his successors are likely to go on building them for a long time to come.

Love among the Ruins

Against the background, or rather in the very heart and atmosphere, of the shattered Germany of the 'twenties Herr Erich Maria Remarque has set a tragi-comedy which holds the attention and moves to laughter, admiration and pity. Remembering only a cruel past, seeing no future worth taking thought for, his *Three Comrades* (Hutchinson, 8/6) live recklessly and with bitter gaiety in a chaotic present. Garage-proprietors by day and none too scrupulous in their dealings, they spend their nights in the taverns where the precariously respectable and the perforce disreputable merge and are mutually tolerant. They are drinkers and gamblers; their loyalty to one another is unassailable; and in *Bob Lohkamp* (who tells the tale) there is a sense of beauty which gives a keener edge to his disillusion and makes quick response when *Pat Hollmann* swims casually into his orbit. With her grace, her spontaneity, her gallant and frank acceptances—and her own private despair—*Pat* is a figure exquisitely drawn; and in the presentation and development of her emotional relationships with *Bob*, so bantering in expression, so serious and tender at root, there is never a false note struck. That, moving to its poignant close, becomes the major theme of the story; but the friendship of the three men remains an insistent motive. *Lenz*, with his exuberant humour, and the graver *Köster* are no mere chorus, nor is the least of their associates less than a fully realised individual. Herr Remarque seems to touch every mood and manner with equal precision and felicity.

The New Loch-Fisher

The Art and Craft
Of Loch Fishing—
A breeze abaft,
The hatch a-wing?
Nay, here do H. P.
HENZELL's modes
Deny to me
The ancient codes.

Enthusiast,
He takes us out
To learn the last
Of lochs and trout—
New things and freak
By mountain shores
To the old creak
And groan of oars.

From Levenside
Unto Calladale
This work's your guide
Since the old shall fail.
It keeps no still lip
On the new outlook;
It is a PHILIP
ALLAN book.



Bosun. "WHILST YOU 'RE AT IT, TOUCH UP THIS MASTERPIECE WHERE IT 'S PEELIN'."

Crown and Pen

As letter-writers the Kings and Queens of England have seldom risen above what our Georgian forebears used to call "the top of mediocrity." The Queens naturally came off best; and a sound rating from ELIZABETH or VICTORIA is almost invariably a vivacious document. But it was an appropriate Coronation gesture to reproduce specimens of royal correspondence—letters of English sovereigns and members of their families—from WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR to GEORGE V.; and this has been handsomely done by Mr. HERBERT VAN THAL. On the evidence before us it is not easy to share the enthusiasm of Mr. ARTHUR BRYANT'S foreword for the talents of the writers; but he may be forgiven his rather excessive attitude of appreciation in view of the magnificent portrait of CHARLES II. he has contributed to a very well-illustrated volume. For the historian there are sufficient hitherto unpublished letters to render *The Royal Letter Book* (CRESSET PRESS, 15/-) a fascinating quarry; while the ordinary reader will rejoice to meet JAMES I. gossiping to his "sweet boys," JAMES II.'s MARY writing in the authentic vein of *The Young Visiters*, and GEORGE III.'s AMELIA crabbing the characteristically limited cuisine of a Dorset inn.

Lady Bess

Many of us will have forgotten that England can now boast three Queen ELIZABETHS; for *The First Queen Elizabeth* (LOVAT DICKSON, 10/6) made little personal impression on her contemporaries and is mainly retrievable now as a factor in the lives of others. Yet, though hardly more than a super in the last act of the Wars of the Roses, ELIZABETH WOODVILLE is said to have made an impressive début in a speaking part, for, appealing to her Yorkist sovereign in the guise of a Lancastrian widow, she so won his heart that he overrode all impediments and married her. "I would not be King," he declared, "to forbear mine own liberty in choice of mine own marriage." In tracing "Lady BESS'S" chequered career, Miss KATHARINE DAVIES shows herself a graceful and discerning advocate for the Crown, arguing with sound authority that the faults of which the royal couple have been accused were mainly the common tendencies of their times. They undoubtedly built up a faction by marrying ELIZABETH'S family to wealthy partners; but mercenary marriages were a fifteenth-century rule, to which their own unpopular love-match was a notable exception.

American Fantasy

There is a great deal to be said for the man or woman who stops to pick up the dropped stitches of tradition; and this

is particularly true of America, which has on the whole left Europe to develop the technique of HAWTHORNE and POE. HAWTHORNE and POE—with a dash of STEVENSON—are the influences most at work in *Strange Houses* (HEINEMANN, 7/6), an eerie romance of transposed personalities whose scene is laid in New York. It would be unkind to indicate more precisely the nature of the doom that involves the charming middle-aged wife of a business potentate, her adoring husband, a pretty lady of Irish antecedents, three mental specialists (one a charlatan), a secretary, a journalist and the genial, worldly and indubitably gifted woman of affairs who tells the story. It should perhaps be said that the story might have been more compact and dramatic. Miss CORA JARRETT has mastered the art of recommending the incredible by a display of convincing workaday detail; her narrative style is unusually distinguished; her setting is almost French in its "regional" glamour. But her action is inclined to saunter with HAWTHORNE when it might have marched with STEVENSON and POE.

A Tract for Troubled Times

Although patriotism is the cause of his writing, Major-General J. F. C. FULLER is so unEnglish as to doubt that a capacity for muddling through is the one thing necessary to our national salvation; that wars are to be won or peace to be kept by good intentions. What is the use, he asks, of raising hundreds of millions for rearmament unless we have a clear idea of what sort of armaments we are likely to want, of what sort of war we are likely to have to fight? In *Towards Armageddon* (LOVAT DICKSON, 6/-) he makes a searching examination of those questions and finds answers to them which are impressive in their logic and lucidity. Every aspect of an urgent problem—supply, man-power, discipline, weapons—is reviewed and a cogent plea put forward for a Grand General Staff to control not only national but imperial defence and for the unification of the three forces based on the paramount importance of the air. Nor does General FULLER confine himself to purely military considerations, for he holds that in this brave new world of ours there is no hard-and-fast line to be drawn between the states of war and peace. He wants a "strategy of peace," with authority and discipline instead of the "chaos" of democracy, and makes no secret of his admiration of the totalitarian polities. Drastic in its criticism of men and institutions, his pamphlet should certainly be read, if not endorsed without question, by all whom it concerns.

Promise

The publishers call Mr. CHARLES NORDEN "a very gifted young writer"; so much is undeniable, even though his *Panic Spring* (FABER AND FABER, 7/6) is not a good novel. The scene is an island in the Adriatic, of the kind that has been popular with novelists since *South Wind*; the method, a loose linking together of the past histories of its present inhabitants; the manner varies. That of the "present" narrative, dealing with the activities and conversations of the islanders, is—in spite of some good if rather highly-polished descriptive passages—slow, vague, long-winded and pretentious. That of, for instance, the chapter called "Walsh" is spare, vivid and quick. The difference in kind was of course intentional; it is hard to believe that Mr. NORDEN meant the difference in merit to be so pronounced. In comparison with the rest of the book "Walsh," and parts of some of the other "recollected" narratives, are so brilliant as to suggest that they were written by another author. The novel bears all the marks of youth: parade of knowledge, emphasis on books, passion for philosophic argument, continual effort to shock—and of course promise.



"HELLO, THIS *IS* A CIVILIZED PLACE! THEY PLAY DARTS."

Industry Rewarded

The compilation of *The Lonsdale Book of Sporting Records* (SEELEY, SERVICE, 15/-) takes its stand as a monument of diligence and accuracy. To give a correct idea of this comprehensive tome is far from easy, for over seventy forms of sport have been dealt with. Look for what you will and your search will not be in vain. Perhaps there may be some disappointment that the introductions to the records are so brief, but it is well to bear in mind that the "eminent authorities" who have written them are limited to the events of last season. From time to time the book is to be brought up to date, and the editor, Mr. ERIC PARKER, quite rightly claims that "never before has such a mass of facts relating to sport already known or unknown been collected together within the boards of a single volume." The illustrations have been carefully and wisely chosen.

Miss M. Dietrich

To some this movie queen
Is "glamorous MARLENE,"
While others won't refrain
From calling her "MARLENE"
And scorn the humble tweeny
Who dotes on "that MARLENE"—
But how these fans must pain 'er,
For they don't know "MARLENE"!

"Idylls" from Ireland

"The lecture will be on 'Tennyson in Malony's footsteps.'"
Adelaide Paper.

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Charivaria

THE New York Health Service declares that the ideal man is six feet tall and weighs thirteen stone. So evidently the New York Health Service doesn't travel to work in a crowded tramcar.

★ ★ ★

"ROYAL LETTERS.
WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR TO GEORGE V."
The Times.

With apologies from the P.M.G. for nine centuries' delay.

★ ★ ★

A woman recently left a fortune to found a home for pet dogs suffering from nerves. In return, will somebody do something for nerves suffering from pet dogs?

★ ★ ★

A dining-room table which revolves slowly between courses has been produced. This possibly belongs to the same suite as the sideboard that revolves rapidly between drinks later on in the evening.

★ ★ ★

"What man," we are asked, "doesn't like to have an adviser behind him?" And the answer to that of course is the man who wants to play his own hand in his own way.



★ ★ ★

In a London teashop each waitress is called by the name of a flower. There is terrific competition among regular customers for the services of Forget-me-not.

★ ★ ★

In a Continental orchestra the conductor struck the violinist with his baton and received a punch on the nose in return. Each subsequently accused the other of losing his tempo.

★ ★ ★

"Devon has a coastline on which broad tracts of golden sands alternate with rocky stretches in which nestle innumerable charming coves."
Railway Company's Advt.

Devon is *so* embracing.

★ ★ ★

A gossip-writer mentions a prominent clubman who has taken up slimming. It seems that he felt he was getting just a little too prominent.



A crow with a white top to its head is reported from Wivenhoe, Essex. We think someone ought to inform the misguided bird that it's still much too early for Cowes.

★ ★ ★

In parts of Central Africa divorce, crime, sport, films and radio are all quite unknown. It would seem hardly worth while trying to publish a Sunday paper.

★ ★ ★

A Czech claims to have the longest arms in the world. He never bothers to ask for the mustard.

★ ★ ★

An American farmer is hastening the growth of his crops by using artificial lighting at night in the fields. All scarecrows, we understand, have to appear in dinner-jackets.



★ ★ ★

It is said that comparatively few cricketers are good golfers. Exactly the same may be said of golfers.

★ ★ ★

"Now London, too, feels the dragging weight of the Continent. She cannot forget the volcano to which she is anchored while the committee for non-intervention in Spain sits wrangling on her doorstep."—*New York Times Magazine.*

It only remains for somebody to drag a white elephant across her trail.

★ ★ ★

A new American tennis-player who is coming over to compete at Wimbledon this year is described as being exceptionally quick on her feet. We trust, nevertheless, she remains in the air long enough for the Press to obtain satisfactory photographs of her play.

★ ★ ★



According to a company official the more gas a person uses the cheaper it becomes. This sounds to us very like a contradiction in therms.

★ ★ ★

A robin has built its nest in a discarded bowler-hat in a Caterham garden. Discarded toppers, for which there is much demand, are generally converted into flats.

Romance

(Written in the wild hope of encouraging "Strip-advertisers" to still further flights of imagination)

O RADIANT life! O large ambition won!
O conquest of despair! O delicate hope!
O love and laughter when the day's work 's done
Gained for you, girls, by using Godley's Soap!

Say not the struggle naught availeth, clutch
The inviolable shade, pursue the gleam,
Dismiss dull care, put fortune to the touch,
Like Lady Blank, with Bloggs' Complexion Cream.

These only on the thorns of life shall bleed,
Mistake the sow's ear for the genuine silk,
Vague half-believers in a casual creed,
Who miss their nightly bowl of Maltworm's Milk.

There is a tide in the affairs of men,
A moaning at the bar, a difficult mood,
When he who fights can have the strength of ten
Through Perkin's Predigested Breakfast Food.

Who is the happy warrior? Who is he
For ever struggling on when faith seems dead?
Not all the waters in the rough rude sea
Can wash Moloney's Hair Oil from his head.

A late lark twitters in the quiet skies,
And when the captains and the kings depart
He goes to sleep with April in his eyes
And Puffwheat Pills rejuvenate his heart.

Empires must moulder and thrones pass away
And all our glories in the dust be laid,
But no one can deny the words we say
About the zest of Gargoyle's Gingerade. EVOE.

A Batsman in Difficulties

"How would you describe an innings of eleven?"

"Rotten," I said.

Lawrence threw down the pen which he had been for some time meditatively sucking.

"That just shows how little you know about cricket. An innings of eleven can easily be as good or better than fifty; it may be as valuable in certain conditions as a century. Some of the greatest innings in the history of the game have been quite small as far as mere runs go. I remember SUTCLIFFE——"

"I'm sorry," I said. "I didn't know it was an innings of yours we were discussing. What about 'an unexpected contribution'?"

"Your pawky humour never fails to delight me. Give it rein by all means. Pile jest on jest, if it pleases you, until the very timbers crack beneath their weight. But for pity's sake, when you have finished, give a little help to a man who has promised *The Mincing Advertiser* an account of the Bashley–Upper Endon cricket-match, to be received not later than the first post to-morrow morning. Don't ask me why I gave such an insane promise, because I don't know. Maybe the air of Bashley went to my head like wine. Or it may have been the vintage cricket. But it's done now. The editor has put his trust in me. And, by Heaven, if you'll only rally round instead of making boyish little jokes, he shall not be disappointed."

"All right," I said. "What's the trouble?"

"Well, it's this eleven of mine that's so awkward."

"I don't see that. There are several more awkward scores than eleven. Five, for instance, and two, and dear old nought. Nought can take a lot of explaining away. Even SUTCLIFFE——"

"The whole point is that nought wouldn't have been awkward at all. I could simply have ignored it. But it's mere affectation to ignore an eleven. So you see what I want? Something that avoids the two obvious perils of a man writing about his own efforts."

"The Scylla of boastfulness and the Charybdis of mock-modesty?"

"Exactly."

"Well," I said, "one or two phrases occur to me. 'Eleven valuable runs,' 'Found a useful partner in Lawrence,' 'Others to reach double figures were . . .' or quite simply, '. . . and Lawrence (11).' Personally I rather favour the last. It has a dying fall."

"Not much of an account of the top score of the side, is it?"

"Top score! My dear fellow, I had no idea. I was thinking of you as an also-ran. And now you suddenly emerge as the mainstay of the side. Just give me a moment while I re-orientate myself. We must have something good for this."

"Not many people could get eleven with the wicket-keeper hissing through his teeth all the time," said Lawrence defensively.

"No, no. He shouldn't have done that. Now, then, what about this—'Lawrence, who gained the distinction of reaching double figures for the first time this season, proved the mainstay of the Bashley batting. Opening confidently——'? How did you open, by the way?"

"I snicked two fours through the slips."

"Yes, and then?"

"Then I got three."

"From a rippling drive through the covers?"

"From an overthrow," he said shortly.

"Thank you. I can see your innings now as clearly as if I had been there. 'Opening confidently with a cleverly-placed four between first and second slip, a shot which he repeated successfully a moment later, Lawrence showed his best form during a stay of three minutes at the wickets. Running with splendid judgment and omitting no opportunity of adding to his score (that's the overthrow, old chap), he appeared to be well-set when a smart piece of work——'"

"I was bowled."

"'—when a ball which failed to rise penetrated his hitherto immaculate defence. His innings, which included two boundaries, was altogether free from blemish.'"

"Nobody could say that about the wicket-keeper," said Lawrence darkly.

"I really must ask you to get that man out of your head. It will never do to put anything about him in *The Mincing Advertiser*. Now if you had been writing this account for one or two London papers I could name, things would be different. In that case I should have suggested: 'As a result of incidents during a match between the two teams last Saturday a serious breach has arisen between Bashley and Upper Endon, which may lead to the cancellation of future fixtures, it is reported.'"

"Why 'it is reported'?"

"Newspapers always use the phrase after statements which have no foundation in fact. 'Comments made in the pavilion——'"

"Cow-shed."

"'Comments made in the dressing-room after the game



THE WORLD AND HIS WIFE DEPART;

OR,

LONDON PRIDE

ALL TOGETHER. "GOOD-BYE! NO BUSES AND NO SUNSHINE—BUT WE THINK YOU'VE BEEN WONDERFUL!"



THE BRITISH CHARACTER

A REVERENTIAL ATTITUDE TOWARDS BRIDGE.

by a Bashley player, alleging improper conduct on the part of the Upper Endon wicket-keeper, were resented by the latter team. "There is no particle of truth in the impugnment," declared Mr. Footbag, an Upper Endon night-watchman who acts as stumper for his village. "The whole thing is a piece of deliberate malice." Mr. Lawrence, the Bashley batsman responsible for the allegations (he made eleven), refused to be interviewed. "I can't bat with a soda-siphon behind me, that's all," he said as he turned away.'"

"This is all very interesting and helpful," said Lawrence wearily. "Why not tell me what I ought to say if I were writing for *The Manchester Guardian*, while you are about it?"

"By all means. 'Lawrence's innings betrayed an appealing affinity with a TURNER landscape. It was an affair of slashing reds and blues, with here and there a deep purple patch. The rippling of cornfields before a south-west wind, the dim contours of the distant Wicklow hills—these were the pictures evoked by the delicate, almost evanescent thrust and parry of his febrile execution. One thought too, watching him, of the sustained brilliance of an ELGAR concerto, the rise and fall of a swallow's flight, sweet flowers at evening, bright faces and the merry lilt of children's laughter; but of course it is difficult to get all these images in. When he was out, beaten and bowled at last by a ball that seemed to flicker ever so slightly before it pitched, one felt that one of the harpstrings of beauty had been snapped. The silver cord was loosed and the golden bowl broken.'"

"I am going to say," said Lawrence, who had not been listening for some time, "'Lawrence, with eleven, was top scorer for Bashley.'"

"'His innings, which included two flukes and an overthrow, was otherwise free from blemish.'"

"'It is reported.'" said Lawrence. H. F. E.

The Gorgeous East

"The dress of British troops of the Indian establishment, like the Army at Home, for the Coronation will be of a classic design by Reville, in pale supple gold cloth, hand embroidered with sirver, and vine diamante in a cascading design of roses and fuchsias according to details just released. Small sleeves of fine gold lace will be edged with tiny rose leaves and have a fuchsia design at the shoulder."—*Indian Paper.*

Bees in the —— ?

I CONFESS at the outset that this did not happen to me. I wish it had. It happened to a friend and fellow-fisher of mine whose honesty as an angler is quite unimpeachable, so I think I may tell you about it without having any slur cast on my veracity. I shall call my friend Jackson, because (unlike Peter the bishop) that is not his name.

Jackson, let me say, is an angler of the first water (a singularly apt phrase). I have never known him return with an empty basket. Even when I am with him he catches fish, and I am a Jonah. What is more, he catches the kind of fish he wants. By that I mean that when he fishes for trout he catches trout, and when he fishes for grayling he catches grayling; whereas when I fish for grayling I catch trout and have to throw them back again because it is the close season; or if I fish for trout I catch parr and have to throw them back again because somebody else wants to catch them as salmon a few years hence; or else I catch eels and have to throw them back again, generally with the cast and a yard or two of line, because I can't get them off. But not so Jackson. He never catches eels, though I have no doubt that if he set out to do it he could catch the Loch Ness monster. On one occasion we both fouled a rubbish-heap in a muddy pool. I caught a cast-off cycle-tyre but Jackson had a salmon-tin on one hook and a sardine-tin on another. So that just shows you.

Well, one day Jackson—so he tells me—had been out all day and had caught nothing. (That, incidentally, is the one part of this story which I sometimes doubt.) He had tried dry-fly; he had tried wet-fly; he had even (he admits with a blush in his voice) tried a worm; but there was absolutely nothing doing. So very dejectedly he packed up and prepared to go home, wondering how he was going to explain it. (My difficulty is the reverse; if I caught anything visible to the naked eye I should have to prove that the fishmonger's had been shut before I left the water-side.)

So downcast was Jackson that, instead of walking home along the side of the river, he took to the road, which, while close to the water, was separated from it by a hedge. Stopping in the shade of a tree to light his pipe, he heard the gentle "plop" of rising fish. His angling zest overcame his temporary hydrophobia and he looked through the hedge to find the explanation, for he had not even seen a rise for hours.

Now the tree was a chestnut heavy with blossom, and round it were innumerable bees (who apparently either had not read TENNYSON or could not find an elm). Chestnut-blossom has a heavy scent, and the bees seemed to find it heady, for every now and then a bee in the last stages of intoxication dropped down on the water. And, hey presto! as soon as it touched the surface a great trout, lurking beneath the tree, rose and scooped it up.

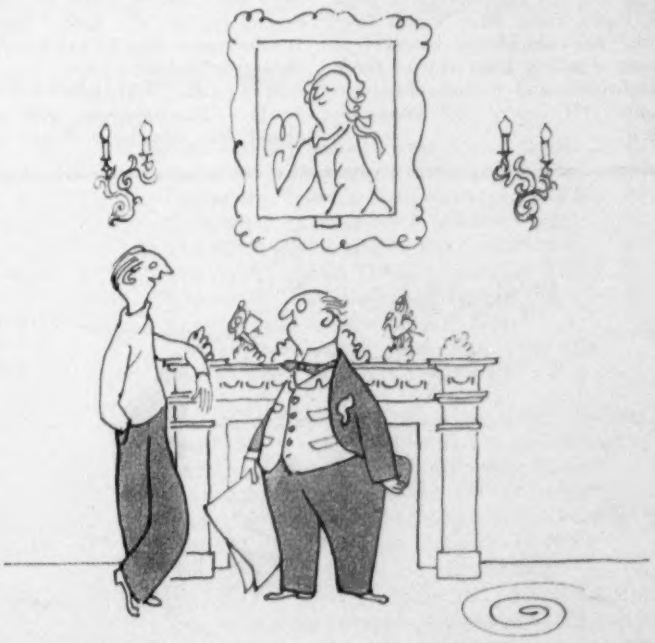
That of course was enough for Jackson. Bees as a bait had not occurred to him, but if the trout wanted bees, bees they should have. So up went his rod again and he looked frantically through his immense collection of lures (he carries a fly-book the size of a cabin-trunk); but, alas! he had nothing even remotely resembling a bee. Your true angler, however, is never daunted; if he cannot find an imitation, the real thing will do. So Jackson set out to catch a bee. How he did it I do not know, nor will he divulge the details of the hunt, though I suspect that it was difficult, painful and probably blasphemous. Finally, however, he did catch one, attached his prey to a hook, and proceeded to do some dry-bee fishing.

He found a little difficulty, he says, in the unaccustomed weight of his lure, but he soon mastered the knack. That I can well believe, for a dry-fly in Jackson's hands becomes incredibly real. Indeed I have seen one turn aside in mid-cast to light on a piece of bread-and-jam thrown into the river by a picnicker upstream. I can only wonder that his natural bee did not turn to a queen; but I have implicit faith in Jackson, and I merely tell you the bare truth as he told it to me.

He cast, then, over the spot where the trout had risen, and at the second cast it rose and took the bee. Not a dainty nibble, but a gulp; it swallowed the bee outright. Any trout rash enough to do that with a bait cast by Jackson is committing suicide, and the struggle was brief. The trout was a large one (for the moment Jackson thought it was a grilse), but within three minutes it was played and landed. Then Jackson dismantled his rod again, for he is a devout man as well as a truthful one, and does not believe in trying Providence too hard. Besides, he had saved, if not enhanced, his reputation as an angler; and he wanted to weigh his catch before it had lost more by evaporation than he could help.

The trout was a beauty and weighed, to even Jackson's amazement, four pounds and two ounces. It was, however, strangely plump, a fact that Jackson rightly attributed to its unusual diet.

Rightly, I say, for when Mrs. Jackson opened the fish to clean it she found inside it a pound-and-a-half of excellent honey.



"YES, FATHER, I KNOW, BUT WHAT VIRTUE IS THERE IN GATHERING MOSS?"

Doggerel's Dictionary

V.

CHEESE.—I once overheard the baffling remark, "All we could get out of him in explanation was that he'd been eating a lot of cheese." If you are uncertain of your attitude to cheese you may easily deduce it from your own idea of what this statement was an explanation of. However, I never yet heard of anyone who was uncertain of his attitude to cheese. Another remark of the kind I once overheard was, "I attribute this entirely to my habit of eating the heads of shrimps," and from this your attitude to shrimps may similarly be deduced. The Chinese artist, CHI PAI-CHIH, specialises in painting shrimps (I just mention this). Nevertheless the really important thing, while we're on the subject of food, is your attitude to asparagus. I advise something very near recumbence. This attitude is no doubt a bit Edwardian, but it shows you mean well, and if your hand is steady you can't miss.

COINCIDENCE.—I have to say something about Coincidence because I said I was going to when I was talking about Anecdotes, but if you imagine I have any good coincidence stories to tell you from my own experience, that's where you're wrong. I have known some very remarkable coincidences, but they don't make good stories. There is one about an ornithological book and a dining-room that would bore you stiff; the coincidence, however, is far more startling than any of those I-swung-round-and-who-should-it-be-but ones. If you're still awake to notice it.

COUNTRY.—Here we come up once more against the problem of the attitude. I suppose about the best attitude to the Country, or "Nature" in general, is that of DAVID GARNETT or H. E. BATES, or T. H. WHITE; but I resent the necessity for an attitude at all. Nearly all attitudes to the country nowadays are fundamentally literary. One can think about carpets or polish-manufacture or even, sometimes, love, without all the time being influenced by what's been written on the subject; but the country, no. Either one tries to show how like one is to one's favourite author, or one tries to show oneself completely independent of all authors, straightforward, competent, virile, beery, full of ancient lore and a first-rate cowman and ploughman, flecked with manure. Only the illiterate and the barely literate attain this attitude naturally. Readers get to it by way of a reaction against the school of country-cottage eave-twitterers. The nearest to a genuine all-round unliterary attitude is the tramp's, because he has no self-consciousness. If he found a tin of condensed milk and a cow in the same field he would not allow thoughts about the nobility of immemorial labour to bully him into trying to milk the cow unless there were nothing he could possibly open the tin with.

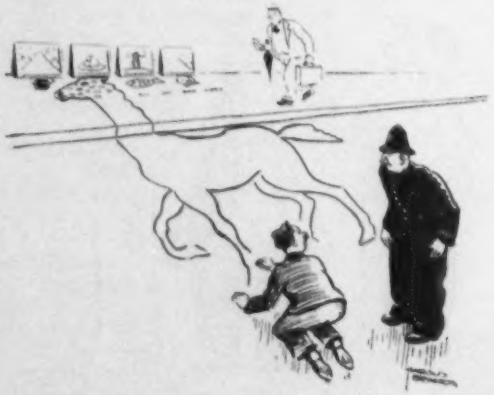
DOLICHOCEPHALIC.—I put this in to show that I know at the moment how to spell it. I also know how to spell Brachycephalic, slowly, and I would have put that in when we were all among the B's if I hadn't forgotten. If I remember long enough how to spell Hyperplatyrrhine I have every intention of putting it in again when we get to H. Steatopygous, still further ahead, has very little chance of surviving the session unless Government support can be obtained. These words I consider to be the finest flowers of ethnology, great strong and free German race and huge big tremendous brave Italian people or no great strong and free German race and huge big tremendous brave Italian people.

ECCENTRICITY.—It is the justification of all aristocracies, said a character in one of ALDOUS HUXLEY's early books. But I don't know that aristocrats make the best eccentrics. Look at my late friend Andrew Mulligatawny (Gin) Fizz. Supposed though I am—that's a hot one, *supposed though I am*—to be writing Gin's biography, I know almost nothing about his ancestry; but I do know enough to be sure he was no aristocrat. He used to say he was born on a coal-barge, and the explanation he usually gave for the swarthiness of his complexion was that he had not been washed for the first five years of his life among the coal. I don't know how true this was. He certainly seldom washed during our acquaintanceship. "I find it enervating to wash," he used to say. "I give myself a daily scrape with a piece of glass," and he once showed me the piece of glass, which he declared was a bit of an electric bulb by bursting which he had caused a highly respected novelist to fall backwards into a dustbin.

EXERCISE.—I don't take any, and I thrive on it. Years ago, when I was living in a London square, I used to take too much, and I throve on that too. There was a girl in the flat below named Alice; we fixed up a couple of trapezes in the trees of the square and I used to throw her about in the air before breakfast. She got me to drop her on a passing policeman once; the policeman was stunned, but when he recovered he married her. Or perhaps before he recovered.

FUM.—This (not to be confused with Fee, etc., Fum), also known as the Funj-Hwang, has long been my favourite bird. It is a bird of good omen in Chinese mythology and its appearance indicates an age of universal virtue. It has the forepart of a goose, hindquarters of a stag, tortoise's back, snake's neck and so on and it stands about nine feet high, and one of the things I most like about it is that it will only perch on the woo-tung tree. Thus it seems plain to me that we are wasting our time trying to attain the millennium without a woo-tung tree. The Government had far better subsidise growers of woo-tung trees instead of fooling about with the sugar-beet industry.

R. M.



"THE HEAD SHAPED SO WELL THAT I THOUGHT IT WORTH CARRYING ON WITH."



"DAMNED FINE SERMON OF YOURS, VICAR!"

On Seeing the First Gnat in Spring

THY noisom Musick, GNAT, and squalid Use
Invite my Numbers. O assist me, Muse,
To tell the Passion of my working Breast,
Now swoll'n to Fury, now to Scorn compresst!

When FLORA, smiling, paints the Landskip green
And Blossoms deck the vegetable Scene,
Then throngs th' impurpled Juice within our Veins,
We trace the curvous Hills, the water'd Plains;
But, thinking on bucolick Haunts of yore,
Thou too, unlovely GNAT, prorog'st thy Snore,
To sully with long Drone our tranquil Miles,
As Snakes the Herbage, or as Catts the Tiles.
Thou hast come sole; but soon a vary'd Band
Will vex the Waters and oppress the Land;
Some rile the Horse, some tease the gentle Cow,
Here agitate the Goat, here move the Sow;
And some, audacious Troop! incise with Zest
Whatever Human Part is most undresst.
Thus will the pungent Beasts, fast multiply'd,
Breathing and breathless equally deride.

How well thy primal Vision, GNAT, recalls
Our copious Banquets, laid in leafy Halls!
One of thy Tribe, a close consanguin'd *Flie*,
Bears glad Advertisement to others nigh:
The pliant *Cheese* allures, the *Pork* invites,
The unctuous *Fish* provoke immodest Bites;
Thy cousin *Wasps* attack in fervent Part
The jammy Furniture of coctive Art,
Nor are they nice to choose, but equal take
The wanton *Pastrie* and the decent *Cake*.

But thou, worst of thy kinsmen, GNAT, too long
Hast plied thy furtive Bite and tuneless Song;
Shall we still waken from soft vesper Doze
To find *thee* pastur'd on our obvious Nose,
And with death-meaning Buffet strike instead
What Portion thou hast, not unlively, fled?
Nay, despicable GNAT, the time has come
To leave thy mordant Ways and change thy Hum;
Our Arms with Strength, with Rage our Hearts are steel'd,
Take thou the Challenge, *we* will take the Field.



"HAVE YOU GIVEN THE GOLDFISH THEIR FRESH WATER TO-DAY?"
"NO, MA'AM; THEY HAVEN'T DRUNK WHAT I GAVE 'EM YESTERDAY YET."

Dress Rehearsal

(A Reverie)

IT is very peaceful here in the stalls of this great theatre. No, it is not—the lights are wrong again and the play has stopped. The poor remote fellow controlling a "spot" up there on the port side of the ceiling (Bill, as usual) has not yet learned which is Miss May, the leading lady, so he has directed his great beam of light on to a not very important chair in the background.

Now they have told him clearly which is Miss May; Miss May is adequately illuminated and all is well. How much, by the way, I sympathise with Bill! I sympathise with everybody at a first dress-rehearsal, which is one of the most prolonged and savage forms of torment known to the civilized world. But down here in the stalls and up there on the stage the sufferers at least have company and comfort. Authors and composers and designers and dance-directors can stumble about the stalls in the darkness and whisper horrible things about each other, about the actors, about the management, about the band. Behind the scenery the actors can huddle together in corners and hiss their opinion of everybody in the stalls. And on both sides of the footlights we have at least, after all these weeks of preparation and practice, some faint notion of what it is that we are trying to do.

But Bill—no. Bill—and Bert—and Bob—and all his colleagues are seeing this drammer for the first time. They have not the remotest notion what it is all about. The deep psychological significance of Miss May's move from the sofa to the chair is lost upon Bill. Indeed the whole spiritual message of the play is at present hidden from him. All Bill knows is that far-off pigmy men below him are continually crying to him to aim his beam in a different direction, to take out his Number Ones and put in his Threes, to substitute amber for blue, to illuminate Mr. Smith and not the stern of the horse. And at the moment he cannot imagine why. Moreover, Bill is all alone—all alone in a little box attached to the distant roof, with nobody to whisper curses to.

Always on these occasions I have a mind to climb up to the roof and comfort Bill, to take him sausages and a whisky, and ask him what he thinks of the drama. But Heaven knows how you get to Bill's eyrie, and I know very well that the moment I did they would cry from below, "BILL! bring up your Three, check Number Two, put a gauze (or something) in your Sevens, and flood Miss May's face with a faint amber radiance. BUT NO LIGHT ON HER KNEES!" And I should be in the way.

So I have never yet yielded to instinct and taken Bill a sausage.

But now all is peaceful again. And how peaceful at this stage is a musical-comedy compared with a revue. This rehearsal has lasted only six hours and already we have done two-thirds of the play. If it had been a revue the scenery would still be stuck in about the third scene; half the company would be crying, "Mr. C., I can't *possibly* change from the bathroom scene to the Cromwell scene in time because of the sword

—or the wig—or the make-up—or the underclothes—or what you will": the author would be madly devising new "front" scenes to give everybody time to change everything; and Bill, instead of having to alter his lights every half-an-hour, would be altering them every thirty seconds.

So we can sit quietly in the background and reflect upon life. Spain, for example, that grim and extraordinary spectacle. Has Bilbao fallen yet? Has Madrid? How queer it is that the more that modern communications develop the less we know about everything. A piece of information can put a girdle round the world in forty seconds, but how often can we believe it? How many months is it since we were assured that Madrid must fall in a week? How many weeks is it since Bilbao was doomed? Spain——

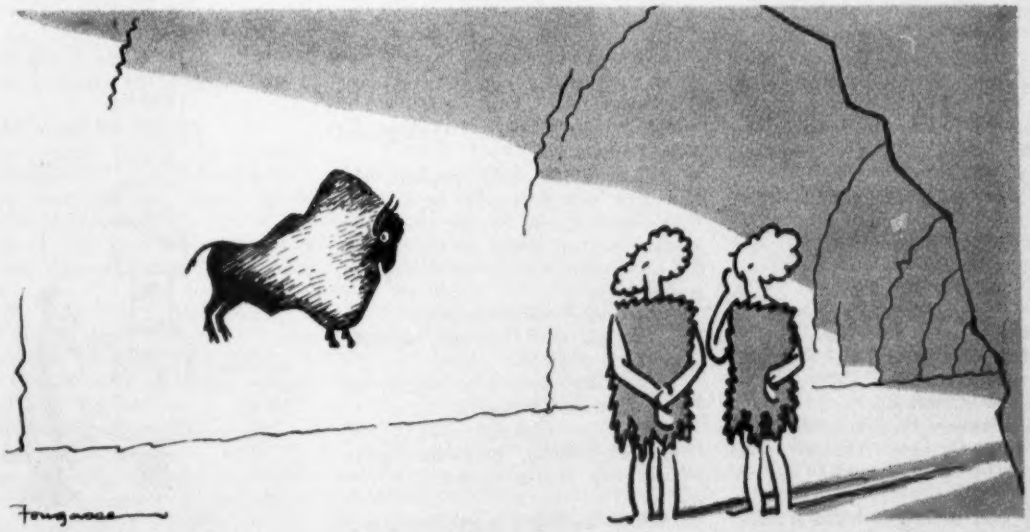
Hullo! we cannot hear a word of this song. We cannot, though we wrote the words, imagine what it is about. We ought to make a fuss. But shall we? It would not, we think, be deemed a suitable time. The truth is that there *is* no suitable time for authors to fuss about the audibility of songs. At the first dress-rehearsals the singers are far too much bothered with their wigs and swords and properties to be bothered about words; and the band has not had time to strike the proper balance. And at the later dress-rehearsals the singers are saving their voices so that we cannot judge. And anyhow, old boy, it will all sound quite different when the house is full.

So we will sit quiet and think about the problems of nutrition. Bill is in trouble again. Bill was asked to put in his whites and the whole stage became flooded with blue. And now Bert has blundered; Bert has "spotted" the horse instead of the hero. Poor Bert. We at least can slip out and have one if we feel like it; but Bert and Bill can never leave their posts. We expect that they too are thinking about nutrition.

What an odd way of earning a living it is, the entertainment of an ungrateful country. The critics ought to attend the early dress-rehearsals—there is one wise critic who does—and behold our manifold troubles. Likewise the Customs Officers and the CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER. They might then take a different view about the Entertainment Tax—or Fine. Heaven knows how many thousands have been spent upon this entertainment already; but they may all go down the drain in very quick time. Whatever happens it must be weeks before those thousands—the "production" expenses—are paid off, weeks, that is, before a smell of profit appears. But through all those weeks entertainment tax—at 16–20 per cent.—must be paid, not on profits but receipts. Strange tax. How would the "industrialist" like that, we wonder? So far the Coronation season has given the theatres three very bad weeks and three pretty good days. During those three weeks most of them, we imagine, were playing to a loss: yet all continued to pay the tax to the Government, though it was the Government's admirable competition in the provision of entertainment which may have caused their losses. Strange tax indeed. The N.D.C., by comparison, is almost a benefaction.

But never mind. The Second Act is creaking along, and soon, I hope, Bert and Bill will get a beer. Let us think about the Honours List. An unimaginative effort, we thought. All, or nearly all, politicians and excellent public servants. But on this rare occasion should we not have seen some of the real popular heroes at the fountain of honour? JACK HOBBS, for example; Mr. BASTIN or Mr. DRAKE—or whoever the king of soccer may be. And why not Sir FRED PERRY? What man in recent years has done more for his country's name? Mr. COWARD and Mr. LAUGHTON are still young, no doubt, but Mr. COCHRAN is not. Miss MARIE TEMPEST's honour was most delightful and deserved; but the names of FIELDS and ROBEY would have made the notion of Coronation honours more vivid and acceptable to many millions than the honourable names of innumerable mayors, colonels, civil servants and even newspaper-proprietors.

However, in a State which still maintains the Entertainment Tax nineteen years after the end of the Great War, it is idle perhaps to expect imagination in such affairs. We cannot hear a word of this song. But does it matter? Bill is in bad trouble again. All the lights have gone out. And we too will slip out and have one. A. P. H.



"WELL, IT'S EVIDENTLY MEANT TO BE YOUR AUNT MATILDA."



"Ah! English gum."

Holiday Plans

"We haven't decided yet about the holidays," said Mrs. Caraway. "And here's a letter from the house-agent asking if we want The Cabin again this summer."

"What cabin?" said Christopher absently. "Listen—can anyone do an anag. of *Uncle's icy veto*?"

"*Inclemency*," suggested Stephen. "No, bad."

"Where we went last year, of course," said Mrs. Caraway.

"Do you mean to say that was called The Cabin? It wasn't nearly big enough for a cabin."

"What do you think about taking The Cabin again, Arthur?" said Mrs. Caraway.

Mr. Caraway folded his newspaper. "What cabin?"

"*Ther* Cabin," said Christopher and Stephen together.

"Oh, that." He thought for a moment. "There wasn't anywhere to put tennis-rackets and things."

"On the other hand," said Stephen, "there were five books."

"Six," said Christopher.

"*Beryl Manners, Prefect; Bannister of Beale's*; *The Constant Nymph*; some W. W. Jacobs stories; and *In Search of England*. Five."

"Why, you've forgotten *The Willing Horse*. Six."

"You win. *Six* books, Father."

"It was too damp," said Mr. Caraway. "I think the sea must come over it in winter."

"Well, what about going to that little place near Bridport again?"

"Beetles," objected Stephen.

"Beetles was the year before that," said Christopher.

"Well, no shops, then."

"There was a shop, but it was stocked entirely against the day when customers would flock in demanding rope-soled shoes and funny postcards."

"Don't let's go there again," said Stephen with finality.

"Let's go somewhere new," said Christopher. "Why not the East Coast?"

"I will *not* be braced," said Mr. Caraway.

"How about Wales?" suggested Mrs. Caraway.

"Without me," said Stephen, who had once been persuaded by a friend that camping in Wales would be grand fun, and cheap, and even if it did rain—well, tents were waterproof, weren't they?

"Cornwall," said Christopher.

"We *might* go to Cornwall," said Mr. Caraway doubtfully.

"Then that leaves Scotland, the Isle of Man and Abroad."

"Let's be frightful and go to Ostend or Knocke," said Christopher. "That anag. begins with a C, by the way."

"Why have we got to go to a resort?" complained Stephen. "We always hate the people when we do."

"We must have sand for William," said Mrs. Caraway.

"It's a mistake to let children get addicted to sand. If you'd never shown him any he wouldn't want it."

"Like canaries and groundsel," added Christopher.

"Actually I don't think William does like digging sand," went on Stephen. "Only he gets so bored watching us bathe that he has to."

"We could teach him roulette."

"The Penn-Frobishers are cruising this year," said Mrs. Caraway.

"*All* of them?" inquired Christopher.

Mrs. Caraway nodded.

"What a chance!" sighed Stephen. "A submerged rock would do it. A grinding crash, a few cool words of command, and the other passengers and the crew get off in the boats. Then, listing heavily to starboard, where Mrs. P.-F. is leaning over the side, the brave ship settles. Presently——"

"They going anywhere near the Spanish coast?" said Christopher.

"Greece, I think."

"I'd like to see old Penn-Frobisher bargaining with a Greek," said Mr. Caraway. "It would be a hard fight, and would probably end with the Greek holding a block of dud oil shares



"I'm in business on me own now, George."



"LOOK, AUNTIE—SEVEN CHILDREN!"
"HOW NICE!"
"OH, YOU DON'T SAY THAT; YOU SAY 'GOOD GRACIOUS!'"

and a ticket for last year's Derby sweep."

"You weren't suggesting *we* might cruise, were you, Mother?" said Stephen scornfully.

"I was *not*," said Mrs. Caraway definitely.

"I don't know," said Stephen, changing ground. "It might be rather fun."

"Foul," said Christopher.

"The people would be awful," agreed Stephen. "Let's buy an island."

"You can get old trams quite cheap," said Christopher.

"I can't tell the house-agents to look out for a tram," said Mrs. Caraway.

"Look here," said Mr. Caraway, dropping his newspaper, "let's get down to this properly. Stephen, get the atlas and we'll definitely decide where to go."

Stephen fetched *The Times* atlas.

"This part is ruled out," said Mr. Caraway, running his finger westwards along the South Coast as far as Bournemouth. "Too near. People coming down in charabancs from London."

"And this is too far away," added Christopher, dismissing Cornwall and Scotland. "Takes two days to get a letter."

"We don't want the East Coast——"

"Or Wales——"

"Or *any*where in the North of England——"

"Which leaves Devon, Somerset and Dorset——"

"Which is where we always go," said Christopher. They thought this over.

"There's that little place near Lynton," said Mrs. Caraway, "where we went in 1928."

"'27," said Christopher. "It was the year I left Rhino's."

"'29," Stephen corrected him. "The year Notts won the championship."

"Anyway, we can't go there again, Mother. Not if it means pumping up the bath-water with those two rusty old pumps in the outhouse."

"You've got to expect to be primitive on holiday."

"Pumping bath-water into cisterns is worse than primitive. Father was always A and I was B, and A kept on stopping to light his pipe or to see how full the tank was."

"Oh, you could be A this time," said Mr. Caraway, "and Stephen could be B."

"Let's go to the coastguard cottage again," said Christopher.

"I'm afraid that's impossible after the letter I wrote to the owner after we left," said Mrs. Caraway. "You remember, Arthur, the woman wanted us to pay for the hole that her lamp burnt in the table-cloth."

"What about *conclusively* for that anag.?" said Stephen to Christopher.

"Good," said Christopher, writing it in. "Bother! it's wrong. Got a rubber?"

"What is it?" asked Mr. Caraway.

"*Uncle's icy veto.*"

"*Consecutively*," said Mr. Caraway, getting up from the table. "You'd better write to the agent, Mary, and tell him we'll take The Cabin again."

"Hooray!" said Stephen. "*Now* I shall find out what happened to *Beryl Manners* after she pushed the geog. mistress into a ravine."

"Did they tell you what happened to the geog. mistress?" asked Christopher with interest.

"That too," said Stephen, "we may find out in August."

Aunt is Right Again

"You can't learn anything about Real Life from books," as one's aunt so often says.

Aunts, of course, are like that—and so, as a matter of fact, are books.

Look at the telephone, and ask yourself seriously: What kind of a part does the telephone play (*a*) in fiction and (*b*) in real life—or, if aunt prefers it, Real Life?

"The strident insistent summons of the telephone-bell roused him suddenly. With a strange foreboding he snatched at the receiver.

"'Who is there?'

"'My name would convey nothing to you.'

"It was a woman's voice, with a curious husky quality. Where had he heard that voice before?

"'What do you want?'

"'To warn you. Remember that in Vienna——'

"Abruptly the voice ceased. A dead, blank silence told him that he had been disconnected."

You know the situation as well as I do. Pug-dog Ballantyne, or whatever his name is, is left with the receiver in his hand, the echo of a husky voice in his ear, and the absolute certainty that in less than three pages a high official at the Foreign Office will be sending him straight to Vienna on a mission of international importance.

Is this what happens when the strident insistent summons of the telephone-bell rouses *you* suddenly?

No.

The only point of resemblance is that you, like Pug-dog Ballantyne, snatch at the receiver with a strange foreboding.

"Yes?"

"Would that be 'The Laurels'?"

(A man's voice, with a perfectly familiar husky quality. You know exactly where you've heard it before. At the local plumber's.)

"Yes?"

"I'm sorry, 'm, but I can't undertake that little job of yours, not this week I can't. But me and Albert can come along early next Tuesday week, if that suits, and p'raps in the meantime you could manage with kettles?"

Nor does the conversation cease abruptly.

You yourself go on saying "Oh, dear!" and things like that, and the husky voice at the other end repeats its regrets, and the suggestions about next Tuesday week, and the kettles. And it all tails off with: "Well, I suppose it can't be helped," from you, and "That's right, 'm," from the husky voice.

And another thing whilst we're about it.

What about those extraordinarily informative telephone monologues that go on in the pages of fiction and tell you everything you want to know about what the person at the *other* end is saying by means of the answers at *this* end? In case you don't get this straight off, we will give you an example. Frightfully modern.

"Hallo, Oswald, my sweet . . . Oh absolutely. I hate breaking bad news myself . . . . Oh, quite, if it isn't money, one can bear anything. . . . Did you say *wed* or *dead*? . . . Ah, I thought it couldn't be wed. . . . How too awful! . . . Still, they say hanging is frightfully quick, don't they? . . . And really, poor dear Uncle Ernest did ask for it, didn't he—leaving the meat-chopper about like that, and buying a new trunk and everything?"

Naturally, my dear Watson, you are now *au fait* with the whole story without having been given one single utterance from the far end of the telephone—all owing to a literary technical device of a rather high order.

The technical devices of real life are far otherwise.

Somebody other than yourself is, and has been for hours, glued to the telephone, regardless of the fact that it's your telephone, and that you yourself, trying to finish a letter to poor dear Edith away in China, are practically going mad at the writing-table.

"Is that you, darling? I felt I *had* to ring up, I was so anxious to hear . . . Yes . . . Yes . . . Oh, good gracious! . . . My *dear!!!* Do you mean absolutely *finished* or only . . . Yes, yes, I see. How frightful! And which of them really . . . ? No!!! Of course, it's utterly dreadful, but I can't help being rather . . . Yes, I know, that's what one feels. Though I should never have expected anything like *that*. But do go on. I'm listening. . . . I'm still here. . . . Yes, yes, I can hear you perfectly. . . . Go *on* . . . Oh, heavens!!"

And where are you? Probably, by the time the fourth time-signal has sounded, on the very threshold of the asylum—and no wonder.

As for the reasons for which people ring up other people in books—well, you can judge for yourself how closely they approximate to those of ordinary everyday life.

"I want Scotland Yard—instantly. Is that you, Scotland Yard? Put me through to Inspector Saddlebags of the C.I.D. That you, Saddlebags?"

"Mayfair One-o-two-o-three-o-four-o—— Hallo, Duchess! *Are you alone?*"

"Is that you, dear? I thought that you'd be glad to hear that your ticket in the Irish Sweep has drawn the favourite—Yes, I said the favourite—Oh, yes, I meant *horse*—the favourite horse . . ."

One question and one only presents itself: Is it the same at home?

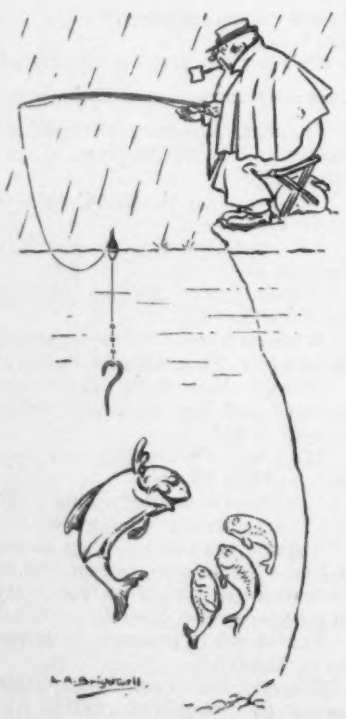
No.

All you ever want—instantly—is the butcher, or grandmama about sending the children over for the day, or Telegrams because you forgot it was your godson's birthday yesterday. And all you get is usually—

"I'm sorry the number's engaged. I'll ring you."

A thing that is never mentioned in fiction's pages.

E. M. D.



"YES, I CAN REMEMBER THE TIME WHEN HE USED TO COME HERE TRYING FOR ME WITH A BENT PIN AND A PIECE OF COTTON."

"Handel-way, Stanmore, which is a continuation of Handel-way, has been re-named Handel-way."—*Local Paper.*

We shall just call it Handel-way, to avoid confusion.

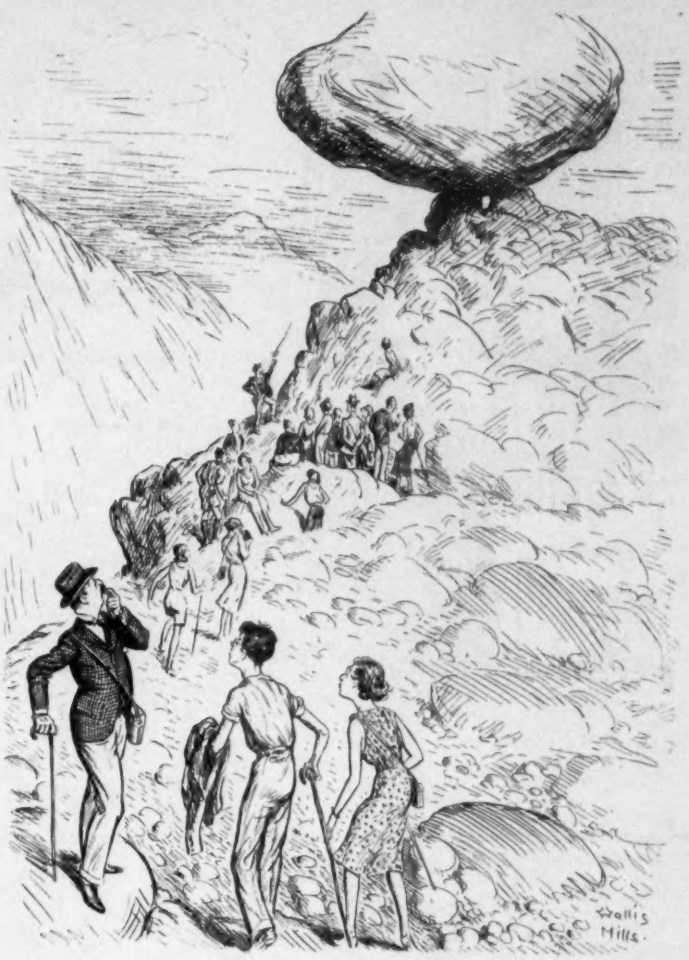
An Exhibition in the Making

I HOPE that no one will leap to the conclusion that because I am writing about the Paris Exhibition of 1937 it will be possible yet awhile to see it as a whole. Oh, dear me, no! The France of the present day, the France of M. LÉON BLUM, does not, with its forty-hour week, work as fast as that. The Front Populaire can very easily promise, but performance is another matter; and my own belief is that during the Blumiad this enterprise never ought to have been undertaken at all. The République is too Socialistic, too Red, too "free" if you like, for a French Exhibition on the grand scale; and I can think of nothing, in peace-time, more heroic and splendid than the patience and persistence of those in authority in Paris at this frantic moment in their endeavour to get service out of their army of labourers and thus to keep faith with exhibitors, restaurateurs, entertainers and the public. If the spectacle of good men struggling with adversity is magnificent, you have magnificence here.

The question whether or not this Exhibition of 1937 ought to have been attempted, must be answered by others; what now concerns us is the fact that it is under construction, and one day will be worth visiting. But when?

A few days ago I was permitted to see what has been done by the forty-hour week workers, and what is being done, and what still has to be done before the wondering and admiring visitors can reap their reward; and I can say at once, without any qualification, that, when ready, the Exhibition will be a miracle. When ready. The French can do this kind of thing superbly, and they are doing it. But I am bound to emphasise the warning that, although we impinge on mid-summer, it is not ready yet, and precious time is being lost.

All the same, I can affirm that the Exhibition advances, certain of the proofs being the mud of it on my shoes and the dust of it in my eyes and the grit of it in my throat. Whichever way you turn, you are conscious that a rich and varied and fervid microcosm is in the making, your ears being filled with the hammerings of those who are erecting, here, the pavilion of Great Britain and there the pavilion of Yugoslavia; here a minaret of Tunis and there a synthesis of Marseilles; here a vast flight of marble steps and there a courtyard of statuary; here an intricate installation of fountains, which are to diffuse all the colours of the prism in their spray; there, just at the main entrance, where the Trocadéro used to be, the Column of Peace.



"BAI JOVE, THAT 'S DASHED CLEVAH!"

Looking at all this, I could think only of JOHN MARTIN, who painted Babylon and Belshazzar's Feast, Nineveh and the Tower of Babel, as being in the least capable of dealing with such a scene.

Not the least of the problems confronting those who have planned the Exhibition has been that of circulation, so that those normal Parisians whose homes and businesses are on one side or other of the Seine may pursue their way without obstruction. The solution has necessitated a new bridge and a new tunnel, the tunnel passing beneath the pavilions of Germany and of Soviet Russia, which, I think I hardly need say, were finished first.

Just as each of the great Paris Exhibitions endowed Paris with a permanent gift—that of 1889 with the Eiffel Tower, and that of 1900 with the Grand Palais and the Alexander III. bridge—so will this one of (shall we say?) 1937 leave behind it for ever the reconstructed Trocadéro and the Picture Gallery (whither the collections of the Luxembourg are to come) and the Reception Gallery adjoining. Thus Paris ultimately will be a gainer. Nor, when the time comes for dismantling, will she be found to have suffered any umbrageous loss, for the slogan of the architects, "Save that tree," has been faithfully respected.

But . . . E. V. L.



"MUMMY, SHALL I TURN IT? IT'S LOVELY AND BROWN ON THIS SIDE."

Swing?

FROM the earliest years of my childhood
My knowledge and brilliant technique
In all things pertaining to musical training
Have always been reckoned unique.
My praises are sounded from Scilly to Chile,
All critics their compliments sing,
But—it's wormwood and gall—over one point I fall:
I am stumped by this
Thing
Called
Swing.

I know all about DYKES and DEBUSSY,
I know all about BRUCKNER and BRAHMS,
With learning I'm laden on HANDEL and HAYDN,
I know every chant for the Psalms.
I can play without any rehearsal all PURCELL,
I've memorised all of *The Ring*,
But nevertheless I'm unable to guess
What on earth is this
Thing
Called
Swing.

I know all about tricks contrapuntal,
The structural form of an Ode,
The Scale Diatonic, the Opus Symphonic
And Harmony, Plainsong and Mode.
I can place without fail any Bliss chord or discord
From out the entire Rite of Spring;
But I'll dine off my hat if I know what they're at
When a band starts this
Thing
Called
Swing.

I perform on the flute and fagotto,
My fame on the fiddle is known.
The drum? I can thump it, I'm strong on the trumpet,
The tuba, the tymps and trombone.
I can handle the harp, at the cymbal I'm nimble,
Triangles I tap—*ting-a-ling!*—
But shall I ere I'm dust ever understand just
What is meant by this
Thing
Called
Swing?



THE WORCESTERSHIRE LAD

FARMER BULL. "WELL DONE, STANLEY: A LONG DAY AND A RARE STRAIGHT FURROW."

England

"I SEE," said Pokewhistle sadly, "that the official journal of the London taxicab trade has appealed to taxicab drivers to smarten themselves up for the benefit of our Coronation visitors. They are requested to wear chauffeur's caps instead of the 'too often greasy ordinary cap or the trilby which has long since lost its shape.'"

"It seems to me," I said, "quite a good idea."

"It is an altogether foul idea," insisted Pokewhistle. "You will be suggesting next that taxicab drivers should provide themselves with change, which they should keep in easily accessible pockets."

"And why not?" I asked.

"Because this sort of 'improvement' shows a lamentable lack of understanding of the psychology of our overseas visitors," said Pokewhistle. "Supposing you were an Australian visiting London for the first time, you would be bitterly disappointed if you found smart-looking taxicabs with CLARK GABLE sort of drivers jingling all over with change. You would feel that you might just as well have stayed at home in Brisbane or Sydney or Wooloomooloo. What overseas visitors want to see is the London they have read about in the classics and the comic papers. If I were organising this Coronation season I should be doing things very differently. Instead of smartening up the buildings by removing therefrom the dust of ages I should have employed men to spray artificial dust on the few buildings that were clean at the beginning of the year. Imagine the chagrin of an Australian who has come to see 'dear dirty old London' and finds that nearly half the buildings in Fleet Street, for instance, have been 'making up' their faces for the occasion."

"There is something in what you say," I admitted.

"There is a lot in what I say," said Pokewhistle, "and if you agree with the main principle you will see what a great many hideous mistakes have been made in catering for the amusement of our visitors. I understand that an effort has even been made to persuade our country hotels to provide edible meals."

"There were always a few hotels that provided edible meals," I urged.

"Exactly," said Pokewhistle, "and that's where I should have started work. A black list of all hotels providing edible meals should have been compiled and the proprietors should have been given the option of closing down or mending their ways. Imagine the baffled feeling of a South African, for instance, who is served with green vegetables cooked in an appetising and nutritious way. At his mother's knee he was taught that the English could not cook green vegetables. It will start him wondering whether our whole monarchical system is not based on a lie. I only pray and hope that no fool has suggested that the waiters at our country inns should smarten themselves up. It will be no use having an Imperial Conference if our overseas friends find that they have been deceived on a vital subject like waiters."

I tried to reassure him that all was still well with our waiters, but he had not finished.

"And the silliest thing of all," he said, "is this suggestion that the public should try to behave with easy bonhomie towards our visitors. Imagine the feelings of a Canadian if he is greeted with a friendly smile by a complete stranger in a railway compartment, or if his attempts at conversation are encouraged! If we are to give our visitors full value for the money they have expended in getting here we must be even more British than usual. Every one of us who values the bonds of Empire must practise haughty stares each morning in front of his mirror. And our politicians of course must look stupid."

"That at least is not impossible," I said warmly.



"I'M NOT WILD ABOUT THAT HAT. COULDN'T YOU WEAR SOMETHING MORE NON-COMMITTAL?"

The Apple-Blossom is Falling

THE apple-blossom is falling,
Green tufts prick the pine;
This is a warm wild wind,
Stronger than apple-wine;
This is a wind of pine-cores, apple-cones—
Hop-la! we're drunk to-day,
Else why should snow be falling
Towards the end of May?

All trees blow as one tree
In the tumbled air,
Copper-beech from chestnut,
Lilac out of pear;
So let's have done with idle writing
And leave the wind to pass
Over the beetle's forest
Of endless shifting grass. O. D.

"Unless our eyes grossly deceive us, *And so—Victoria* has 'best seller' written all over its 576 pages."—*The Church Times.*

Rather monotonous perhaps.



"THESE FELLOWS OF MINE ARE ALL THE SAME. THEY WILL *NOT* MAKE USE OF LABOUR-SAVING APPLIANCES."

Realism

SOME people are very hard to please. For months those newspapers who do not approve of Mr. GEORGE LANSBURY'S type of pacifism have been sarcastically imploring him to "go and tell that to HITLER." Well, Mr. LANSBURY has now gone and told it to HITLER; and by all accounts Herr HITLER listened very carefully, remembered that Mr. LANSBURY has a damaged leg, and provided him with something to rest it on, and finally said that if there was one thing he wanted more than another it was peace, and that Germany was prepared to make one in any organised attempt to discuss the matter.

But are Mr. LANSBURY'S critics pleased because he took their advice? Scarcely. Apparently his visit was "an unauthorised attempt to meddle in international relationships." And my newspaper hopes that "the FUHRER will not give too much weight to the opinions of a private and unauthorised individual." Well, reader, we may cry "Amen" to that. For apparently what Mr. LANSBURY said to Herr HITLER was that war is a very bad thing and that he hoped there wasn't going to be one. And it would be altogether too bad if Mr. LANSBURY went and gave Germany the impression that we in England think a thing like that. But never mind. I expect Herr HITLER reads the English newspapers, and they'll make it clear to him that everybody in England but Mr. LANSBURY realises that he is a blatant hypocrite and that Germany is inhabited by 60,000,000 mad dogs. So the interference of a private and unauthorised individual will have done no harm.

Nevertheless, even discounting Mr. LANSBURY'S childish meddling, the Realists* in international politics are having a worrying time. There is this silly-season rumour of a pact between Germany and Russia. When it first began to be talked about the Realists just smiled. It was too absurd. Didn't everyone know that Russia and Germany were at daggers drawn? Weren't the things that the Germans hated above everything Communists and Jews? And weren't all Russians both Communists and Jews? And anyhow wasn't Germany after the Ukraine? And wasn't Russia trying to encircle Germany? You could hardly expect any Realist to be alarmed by a yarn like that.

But as time went on the situation began to look decidedly nasty. Both countries seem to be in danger of losing their realism and of failing to see that the thing is essentially impossible. All sorts of irrelevant side-issues are being dragged in. There is some nonsense about the German and Russian Military Staffs admiring one another and wanting to be friends. Ridiculous economists are pushing an oar in and pointing out that Russia is rich in raw materials

* REALIST—One who realises that everything and everybody is perfectly awful, that a catastrophic war is inevitable, and that nothing whatever can be done about it except to ensure that it is catastrophic for *both* sides.

and could supply Germany's pressing needs. And to crown all there are people who are going round saying that the longer Fascism and Communism go on the more alike they become, and that it is perfectly logical for Communism *à la* STALIN and Fascism *à la* HITLER to get together.

Well, of course when you get talk of that kind an ordinary sane Realist is justified in asking if he is in a madhouse. People must see that to suggest that the ideology of wearing a red shirt need not always be completely opposed to the ideology of wearing a black one, or that details about raw materials matter more than anti-Semitism, is just spoiling the game. Besides, if we are going to have that sort of thing, what on earth is going to happen to the Situation and the Crisis and European tension and all that? Consider. If Nazi Germany can be friendly with Soviet Russia for silly reasons like that, where is the thing to end? Germany is already friendly with Italy and Japan, and Russia is already friendly with Austria and France, and France is friendly with us, and we're friendly with the United States, except that the Americans are so *stupid* sometimes. And if nonsense about admiration and raw materials and trade and so on is really going to be dragged into politics, there is absolutely nothing to prevent the most ridiculous sets of people from getting together. I mean to say, the whole thing begins to look like the end of a drawing-room comedy instead of like a proper International Situation.

I therefore suggest that we Realists —we people who have our feet on the earth and our fingers on the pulse of things and our ears to the ground— must get together and issue a manifesto setting forth the following:—

We naturally want peace and desire friendly relations between the nations. BUT

We are not such fools as to believe the thing is possible. BECAUSE—

(1) Fascists and Communists hate one another and Democracies hate both of them. And everybody who isn't one is the other. Or the other.

(2) Germany and Russia and France and Italy and Japan and Old Uncle Tom Cobbley and All are engaged in a mad arms race. Why? Because they think we think *they* think—well, anyhow, there's obviously going to be a Crisis.

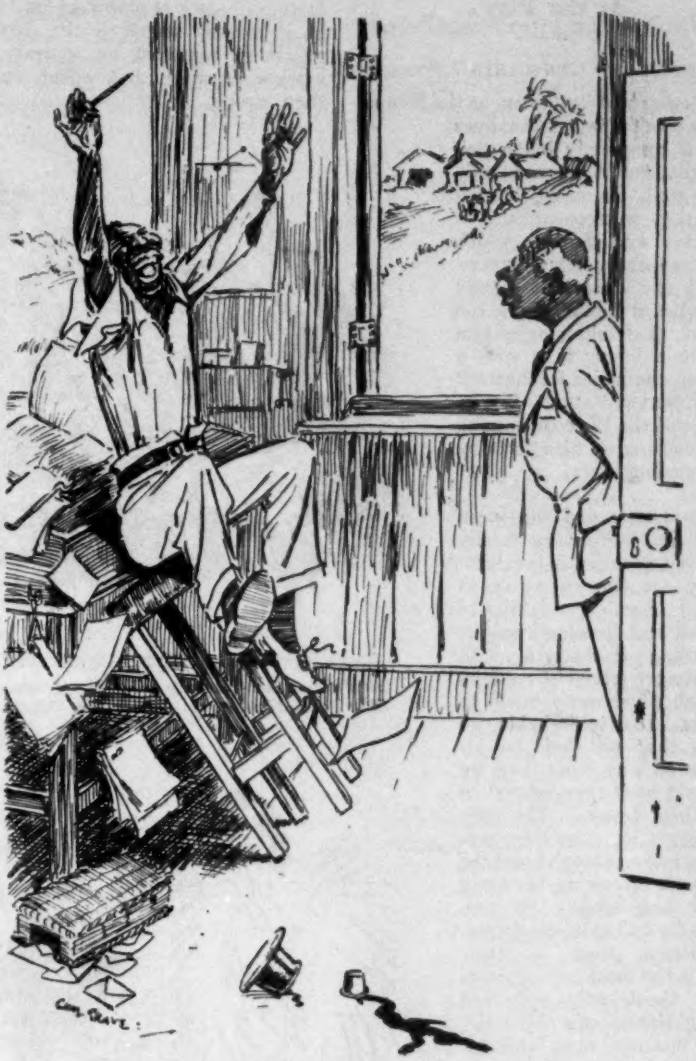
(3) Germany and Italy want colonies, but since we know how expensive it is having colonies we obviously can't allow it because we *like* Germany and Italy and we don't want to see them waste their money.

(4) Japan and France sweat their labour, and Russia's is all convict labour and the standard of life in Germany and Italy is so low and the standard of life in America is so high. Which isn't fair.

(5) The Mayor of New York doesn't like HITLER.

(6) Anyhow, it's all completely unauthorised and isn't being done through the well-tried Diplomatic Channels.

There. That ought to learn them. In fact it might provoke a protest. Or even an Incident. And then we could send a cruiser and there would be riots in Paris and Czecho-Slovakia would mobilise and everything would be as real as real again without any of this upsetting tomfoolery.



Clerk. "NOTHIN' WRONG, MASSA. SOMETIMES JEST HAPPINESS GETS DE BETTER OF MAH."

The Old Firm

"J. Smith, A. Willmot and V. Jackson (West End) beat W. Tom, R. Dick and J. Harry 31—24."—*Nottingham Paper.*

A Pretty Sight

". . . and motorists had to crawl in single file along the Mall, Victoria-street and Parliament Square."—*Daily Telegraph.*

At the Play

"LADIES AND GENTLEMEN" (STRAND)

Ladies and Gentlemen, at the Strand, sets out to depict the lives of a completely inane rich family, and it succeeds only too well. So empty-headed are they, so preoccupied with whims and fancies which change every few minutes, that the dramatist fatally handicaps himself from the start. I should imagine him to be a young man with a great admiration for the work of EVELYN WAUGH. But he has not the WAUGH cunning in building up his effects by concealing them.

In *Ladies and Gentlemen* the *Sutton-Hanbury* family are not revealed in incident; they are thrown at us in Act I., Scene 1, a family of bored and frivolous people, amusing themselves with successive trivial love-affairs which never mean much to them. It is improbable, we feel, that we shall be interested, any more than we should be if they related to us their dreams. The only question is: Can they perhaps make us laugh? and the answer proves to be: Only now and again. So profoundly dull are these *Sutton-Hanburys* that in their home the most conventional and theatrically-approved naughtinesses of a philandering business man and his vain and vapid wife come to nothing in the dramatist's hands.

CLEOPATRA used to try out new poisons on unfortunate slaves. *Lady Georgina Sutton-Hanbury* (Miss ISABEL JEANS) tries out doubtful slimming pills on the cook and turns her blue, but expects lunch as usual. Her son *Clive*, for ever reading poetry, provokes no catastrophes, but both her daughters, *Diana* (Miss GOOGIE WITHERS) and *Sybil* (Miss PENELOPE DUDLEY WARD), do, and *Diana's* catastrophe makes what story there is. She drives a very naïve young South African (Mr. PETER MURRAY HILL) to attempted suicide and realised gaol, and she nearly brings him to the further disaster of marrying her. But he is a very stupid South African, meant to represent by contrast the wholesome veld, but silent rather than strong.



A LITTLE TALK ABOUT LIFE

Sir Philip Sutton-Hanbury . . MR. ATHOLE STEWART
Clive Sutton-Hanbury . . . . . MR. PETER COKE



PARTY AFTER-EFFECTS

Lady Georgina Sutton-Hanbury . . . MISS ISABEL JEANS
Ann Prentice . . . . . MISS ANNE FIRTH

Of the men, *Sir Philip Sutton-Hanbury* is a part which Mr. ROBERTSON HARE might perhaps have made something. Mr. ATHOLE STEWART gives him enough dignity to throw into all-too-plain relief the banal situations in which he is placed, proferring jewellery to the virtuous young secretary (Miss ANNE FIRTH), or boring his guests with maps and plans. This secretary is the most successful character, as she watches with patient forbearance and suppressed humour the vagaries of the petty tyrants who give her a fresh command every minute. And she has her decisive part to play at the end.

Miss ISABEL JEANS did what could be done with *Lady Georgina*; but she deserves more subtle parts than this. When she and the two daughters make us laugh it is generally because they are insulting each other. Downright brutal rudeness is nearly always refreshing on the stage, and audiences love any sort of a fight; but it is an unhappy state of affairs when abuse provides the high moments of an evening.

D. W.

"AND THE MUSIC STOPPED" (NEW)

When the music stopped in *James Caraval's* drawing-room, that is to say when *Margery* rose screaming from the piano, there was no break in the tune, for it was miraculously continued on another piano in the bedroom upstairs, where *Caraval's* body had been left by the police only a little while before. The key of the bedroom was in the *Inspector's* pocket; were the keys of the piano being caressed by *Caraval's* spirit as a cynical farewell to the guests downstairs who had each such good reason to detest him?

This exciting moment is typical of a number which Mr. NOEL SCOTT has worked into his play—moments, however, on which he has relied too much, not because they are ineffective but because, unsupported by any later developments of the characters, they lend only a mechanical tension.

The early theme was full of promise. *Caraval*, notorious for his skill in drug-running, blackmail and most of the unlovelier arts, had collected in his

Chelsea flat a supper-party of four people who wished him dead, and had then told them that, warned by a strong premonition that he was about to die, he was anxious to learn which of them was to find the courage to be his murderer. Admirably played by Mr. EDMUND WILLARD, his sinister and arresting personality dominated the opening scene and suggested a coming clash of character which would be worth while.

The guests looked fairly unmurderous, but *Lady Charity* (Miss PHYLLIS DARE) had once been *Mrs. Caraval* and that experience was rich in motive; *Peter* (Mr. IAN FLEMING), a doctor already arrived in Harley Street, had made a fool of himself as a young man over some drugs and had been *Caraval's* victim ever since; *Bob* (Mr. JOHN WOOD) had made the mistake of using *Caraval* as a fence for the disposal of family jewellery retrieved from a step-mother; and *Margery* (Miss RENÉE GADD), his *fiancée*, had suffered enough unpleasantness from *Caraval* to make her hate him.



TENSE MOMENT IN A CHELSEA FLAT

Margery Endean . . . . . MISS RENÉE GADD
Bob Severn . . . . . MR. JOHN WOOD
Detective-Inspector David Kinneir . MR. BERNARD LEE
Richard Fabian . . . . . MR. EDWARD ASHLEY
Dr. Peter Marlow . . . . . MR. IAN FLEMING
Lady Charity Carstairs . . . . . MISS PHYLLIS DARE

In this situation of an intending victim probing the minds of his would-be assassins there seemed material for a novel treatment of the psychology of murder; but it was cut short when *Caraval*, hiding in an ante-room during the brief visit of another of his enemies, was found to have been stabbed. A difficult selection of ready-made suspects faced the *Inspector*, who quickly added *Caraval's* half-witted brother, also played by Mr. WILLARD, to his list; and after that the play settled down into a study in detection, punctuated from time to time by ingeniously-devised surprises. Of these I must say no more, except that they kept one guessing.

The general working out is neat, and those who are content to speculate on guilt will find the play enjoyable enough. But others will wish the police examinations shorter and a greater depth of shade in the sketching of the characters, who are no more than conventional pieces.

Mr. WILLARD'S was the best performance. *Caraval's* twisted ironical nature he outlined with a skilful economy of emphasis, and the humorous cunning he gave *Daniel Caraval* was excellently done. Mr. BERNARD LEE'S *Inspector* was off the beaten track and all the better for it; Miss DARE wrestled heroically with a poorly-written part fatally overloaded with facetiousness; of the others I liked best Mr. EDWARD ASHLEY'S suave villain and Mr. DOUGLAS STEWART'S short impression of a Police-Surgeon whose thoughts, as his name suggested, were with the Turf.

ERIC.



THE DOUBLE

Daniel Caraval . . MR. EDMUND WILLARD

How Does Your Garden Grow?

PEOPLE who grow their own vegetables are being asked to declare in their income-tax returns how much they save on greengrocers' bills. This amount is to be added to their income in the return of their earnings.

Mr. Punch suggests to the CHANCELLOR some further ways of finding the money he wants:—

(1) Amounts saved by women shopping at special bargain sales must in future be recorded as income and entered as such in their husbands' returns, giving venue of sale and address of regular shopping centre.

(2) Cash or cheques received at Christmas and on birth or other festal days from uncles must be reported to Father and entered by him as income, unless amount received in one taxable year does not exceed five shillings and the recipient is under seven.

(3) Season-ticket holders must show difference between ordinary fares and season as income. No relief will be granted for standing in the queues.

(4) Housewives who knit jumpers and socks for the family must keep record of all expenditure and show difference between cost of wool purchased and price of article, if bought in the shops, as "profits from vocation." No amount must be deducted for wives' labour costs.

(5) Business houses running cocktail or other parties in commemoration of Silver or other Jubilees must charge their guests with an entrance fee sufficient to cover all expenditure of said parties. Otherwise the total costs (being taxable profit abstracted from the business) must be written back in the balance-sheet as "net profits." Hotel-keeper's vouchers must accompany returns.

The Animals' Day

NEXT Tuesday, June 1st, will be Animal Flag Day, organised on behalf of the R.S.P.C.A., Our Dumb Friends' League and other animal welfare bodies. All those who care at all for animals can help to save them from sickness and suffering by buying a flag on Tuesday.

"A" Company and the Fly Situation

THE following file has just turned up from Palestine where our old friends from Ypres Barracks, Havvershot, are at the moment helping to maintain law and order. The bundle was tied, rather symbolically, with red tape.

Informal letter from Captain Bayonet, O.C. "A" Company, 1st Loamshires (on detachment at Rigadoon), to Quartermaster (at H.Q. at Saraband)

DEAR LEDGER,—There's too much nature out here in the wilds. In other words, my cooks report that the flies in the cookhouse are "somethink crooel," and the troops have flies in all their quarters. In fact Beelzebub is pretty busy. So here is an indent from Q.M.S. Fourbytwo for fifty flypapers, which please get from whoever is responsible for supplying same and send out here at once for the love of Mike. Yours,

A. BAYONET.

Very formal letter from Captain (Q.M.) Ledger to O.C. "A" Company

SIR,—Reference your indent for Papers, Fly....50, I am taking steps to obtain these and same will be sent you forthwith, when obtained, in due course.

G. LEDGER,
Capt. (Q.M.)

N.B.—I can trace no Private Beelzebub on your Company strength. I presume he is a local native employed as extra sanitary man. Well, you know that's quite unauthorised and you can't get rations or kit for him, so don't try it on.

Memo from Q.M. to Someone-in-the-Ordnance

Herewith indent for Papers, Fly....50, please.

Answer to Above

Papers, Fly, are not an article of store here. Apply R.A.S.C.

Memo from Q.M. to Someone-in-the-R.A.S.C.

Herewith indent for Papers, Fly....50, please.

Answer to Above

Don't keep 'em. Try Ordnance.

Telegram from Q.M. to Ordnance

Papers fly fifty urgently required stop please say how where to whom submit indent stop urgent.

Letter from Ordnance to Q.M.

With reference to your telegram and further to my earlier letter, I should have explained that while Papers, Fly, Complete, are not held in store here, we supply the viscid mucilage which is the adhesive constituent of the articles concerned. This will be issued on demand, but paper sheets to form the groundwork must be obtained from the R.A.S.C.

Phone message from Captain Bayonet to Q.M., taken down at H.Q. by Private Muzzle

SIR,—Captain Bayonet phoned to say where the duce are his flypapers, please, and Behell Shebub is not a native but lord of flies, see Bible.

Huffy reply from Q.M. to O.C. "A" Company

Tell Captain Bayonet the matter is in hand and not to bother me with talk about Bibles and such, even though we are in Palestine.

Formal letter from Q.M. to Someone-in-the-R.A.S.C.

SIR,—I am directed to apply to you for Sheets, Paper (Army Form number not ascertainable), to form basis for Papers, Fly, urgently required by one of our Companies on detachment. Herewith, therefore, formal indent for Papers, Flypaper, Without Viscid Mucilage, Sheets....50.

G. LEDGER,
Capt. (Q.M.)

Letter from R.A.S.C. to Q.M. 1st Loamshires

No article such as you mention, namely, "Papers, Flypaper, Without Viscid Mucilage," exists officially. Suitable paper is, however, being sent you herewith.

Urgent letter from Q.M. to R.A.S.C.

Ref. my QM/FP/14. Fifty sheets paper received, but please confirm that this is suitable paper for flypaper. I understand the flies are very numerous, whereas the sheets sent won't accommodate more than two or three dozen flies at a time.

Answer from R.A.S.C. to Q.M.

Additional supply of paper is being sent in view of your complaint. Apply to Ordnance for further instructions.

Letter from Q.M. to Ordnance

SIR,—I am now in possession of a large supply of Paper, Flypaper, Without Viscid Mucilage. Would you please supply Mucilage, Viscid, Flypaper....1 pint (or sufficient for three hundred sheets).

Letter from Ordnance to Q.M.

Herewith two-and-a-half tundals of Mucilage (English equivalent, 1·052 pints). Instructions for spreading on sheets follow.

Telegram from O.C. "A" Company to Q.M.

Where hell my flypapers. BEELZEBUB.

From Q.M. to O.C. "A" Company

Please find herewith:—

(1) Paper, Flypaper for the purpose of, Sheets ..	300
(2) Mucilage, Viscid, Flypaper, Tundals.....	2½
(3) Sheets, Instruction.....	1

Letter from O.C. "A" Company to Q.M.

Materials for flypaper received, but only 128 sheets available, as owing to mucilage leaking rest are in one solid block. For same reason only about half-a-tundal mucilage is now available, but Privates Pullthrough and Rifle are doing their best to make it go round by watering it down. Meanwhile please send further copy of instructions, original sheet sent being embedded somewhere in the block of paper referred to above.

Letter from O.C. "A" Company to Q.M.

Further to my yesterday's letter—



"That 's what I like about caravanning. Smell the jolly old camp-fire?"

(1) Please send more paper, only thirty-seven sheets being now available.

(2) Please send any information available as to how to unstick various articles stuck together, such as (*a*) Private Pullthrough's shorts and Orderly-Room chair, (*b*) copy of *Army Act* and a portion of meat ration, (*c*) a mess-tin, three handkerchiefs of Private Rifle's and a photo of C.S.M. Magazine's wife, and (*d*) Private Sling's middle finger and thumb (luckily same hand).

(3) Please send more mucilage.

Telegram from Q.M. to O.C. "A" Company (despatched before receipt of above)

Ordnance state imperative not water down mucilage otherwise useless owing reduced viscidity stop in any case useless unless mixed with poison first as per instruction sheet stop apply medical officer for suitable poison stop suggest deferring manufacture flypapers till this obtained.

Report from O.C. "A" Company to Q.M. (crossing above)

(1) Four flypapers, all that are now left, complete and in position by 9.0. A.M. this morning. Flies delighted with it and are turning up in larger numbers than we have yet seen. One or two of the smaller ones seem to find the going a trifle heavy, but in general they eat the mucilage off as soon as it is put on.

(2) Ref. 2 (*d*) of my previous letter, please now add little finger of other hand, and forward information requested urgently.

(3) Please send more paper.

(4) Please send more mucilage. A. A.

Moving Pictures

Things I'd like to see again
From a window in the train.

Lacquered kingcups by a stream,
Georgian farmsteads painted cream.
A tidy woman sitting still
In a garden on a hill.
Moving rays of lettuce rows,
Willows black with nesting crows,
And the lazy measured turn
Of the wide-winged gliding hern.
Cherry flowers, hanging high,
White against the stormy sky.

These are things to see again
From my window in the train. J. G.

"Fountain Lunch Combination man with experience preparing and serving salads, sandwiches, light lunches, fountain drinks and sundaes. Must be a conscientious, willing, efficient, honest, obedient, polite, tactful, courteous, clean-living young gentleman residing in Vancouver, who can satisfactorily cater to a higher class trade. Of good family training, atmosphere, background and environment, that will keep place spotless; 17 to 22; of high morals, principles and ideals; tall, thin, good-looking, engaging personality, sensitive to customers' wishes, giving personal, interested and understanding service. Write fully, giving age, height, weight, education, references, experience and nearest phone number. Please don't waste our time or yours if you can't fill all requirements."

Advt. in "Vancouver Daily Province."

Would any ambitious young man care to emigrate?

Mr. Silvertop and the 'Arpsickle's Purple

Mr. Silvertop took out his pen-knife and began to scrape large lumps of villainous-looking carbon from his pipe.

"'Ave you ever noticed 'ow often a man 'oo's on the very edge of success misses it altogether because 'e can't clear the last 'urdle, what may be only 'arf the size of the ones 'e's already taken in 'is stride? I've seen it 'appen time and again, and there never was an 'arder case than my Cousin Jasper's. Long afore 'e took up deep-sea diving 'e was 'aving a few days' tour through the West-country on 'is push-bike, and going round a corner one morning 'e went slap into a girl 'oo was pedalling along in an 'ell of an 'urry.

"'Ere, where's the fire?' 'e asks.

"'I'm ever so sorry,' she ses, 'racing like that. But my dad's took queer and I'm fetching the doctor.'

"'Well, you'd better 'op on my step,' ses Jasper, 'because your front-wheel's gone more square than round.'

"'It's ever so good of you,' she ses, as they bowls along.

"'It's nothing,' Jasper answers, 'aving 'ad time to spot 'ow pretty she was. 'Tell me about your dad.'

"'E's the chemist 'ere,' she ses, 'but 'e sells most everything from oil-stoves to 'ams, in a cosy little shop down next the slaughter-'ouse. This morning 'e's got the twinges inside, something awful. My name's Poppy 'Arpsickle.'

"'Mine's Jasper Silvertop,' ses Jasper.

"Well, after the doctor's 'e gives 'er a lift 'ome, and she brings 'im in to 'ave a glass of 'ops and meet 'er ma. Mrs. 'Arpsickle turned out nice, but proper worried about 'ow to find 'elp for Poppy in the shop while she was a-looking after the old man.

"'Ow long's it likely to be for?' asks Jasper.

"'Only a few days,' she ses. 'E's been like this afore.'

"'Then you let me 'elp 'er,' ses Jasper. 'I'm a rare 'and be'ind a counter.' So they fixes it.

"'The first thing we must do is to make up some more of the Purple,' Poppy tells 'im. 'We're dreadfully low in the Purple.'

"'Purple what?' 'e asks.

"'Why, 'Arpsickle's Purple 'Ealer,' she ses, 'what my grand-dad invented and what all the folks round 'ere takes. It's supposed to cure anything.'

"'Then why don't your dad 'ave a swig?' 'e asks.

"'Coo, that's rich, that is!' she cries. 'Dad take the Purple! 'E'd rather take poison and be done with it.'

"'Asn't it never cured no one?' 'e asks.

"'Not reelly, of course,' she ses, 'but the folks 'oo feels 'appier a-swallering something 'as a notion it 'elps 'em. Come on, and I'll show you 'ow it's made.'

"Jasper 'e soon 'as the 'ang of it, and as they was getting on like an 'ouse on fire by this time, the hour they spent by the kitchen-sink a-mixing the Purple went so quick Jasper 'ardly noticed it. After they'd bottled the stuff Poppy showed 'im where everything was in the shop and left 'im in charge.

"Well, right from the start 'e found 'e 'ad a wonderful manner with customers, though 'e'd never sold anything in his life, and whether it was a bottle of eye-wash or a packet of mint 'umbugs they went away feeling they'd got ezactly what they'd wanted. And so by the time an old chap 'obbles in, bent double with rheumatics, 'e was fair confident.

"'You 'aven't nothing what'll cure this 'ere back of mine?' asks the gaffer.

"'Course I 'ave,' ses Jasper. ''Arpsickle's Purple's made for a back like yours. And only a bob a bottle.'

"'Does it work quick?' asks the gaffer.

"'Like lightning,' ses Jasper, getting proper rash.

"'Right,' ses the gaffer, 'I'll 'ave a bottle, but don't wrap it up, for I'll take a dose now, and if it don't do nothing to 'elp I'll 'ave my money back.'

"Jasper didn't like that much, but what could 'e do? Just then Poppy come in the shop and 'e winks at 'er.

"''Arpsickle's Purple's the ticket for backs, isn't it?' 'e asks 'er.

"'Course it is,' she ses, 'it's cured 'undreds.'

"'We'll soon see,' ses the gaffer, and swallers down a good dose. Well, Jasper ses 'e'd 'ave known 'e was dreaming if Poppy 'adn't been there too to see what 'appened. For the old boy gasped a second or two and went a bit twisted in the face, and then all of a sudden 'e stood up straight as a ramrod. 'I'll be blistered!' 'e ses, 'it's worked!'

"Before Poppy and Jasper 'ad reelly pulled 'emselves together the news leaks round the village the way news does, and the shop was beginning to look like the out-patients' ward of an 'ospital. But it didn't make no difference what people 'ad, jaundice or a squint or the staggers, one dose of the Purple did the trick. You can imagine 'ow the excitement grew. Until, after about an hour, all of a sudden the Purple just stopped working. And after it 'ad failed on an easy case of perpetrating 'eart, Poppy, 'oo 'ad 'er 'ead screwed on, cleared the shop like knife and bunged the shutters up.

"'You see what's 'appened,' she ses to Jasper, 'that stuff was all of your mixing, and you must 'ave lost track of grand-dad's formoola when you got talking so 'ard. Soon as we got on to my mixing the Purple failed. Can you remember what you did?'

"'Course I can't,' ses Jasper, 'I was too busy thinking 'ow lovely your eyes was to worry about no formoola.'

"'Well, some'ow or other we've got to find yours again,' she ses, 'for there's a fortune in it. We'll 'ave to go back to the sink and 'ave the same conversation and mix some more. And I'll tell you what—we can keep trying it on dad.'

"Jasper ses apart from one or two kisses they 'ad just the same conversation, but some'ow the effect didn't come out the same, though they tried and tried till somewhere near dawn, when pore old Mr. 'Arpsickle went on strike. First thing next morning the journalists started to arrive from London, and Jasper 'ad 'ardly fobbed 'em off with a story about running out of an important chemical when one of these 'ere company gents drives up with an offer of five thousand quid for the formoola. While Jasper was a-jawing with 'im Poppy biked like 'ell round the neighbour'ood to see if anyone 'ad any left in a bottle, what could be annihilised, but of course every drop was drunk by then.

"If I was one of them perishing novelists," said Mr. Silvertop, "it'd be easy for me to dish you out as 'appy an ending as you wanted on a start like that. But reel life don't always work out to order. After the company gent 'ad been a-cooling 'is 'eels in the parlour for a few hours and risen to seven thousand, and Jasper and Poppy 'ad been a-racking their 'eads in the kitchen, the strain got too much for Poppy, suddenlike, and she starts giving Jasper an 'ell of a dressing-down. Well, if there was one thing pore old Jasper couldn't never stand up against it was 'ard words, and by the time she'd run out of breath 'e was on 'is bike, 'eading for 'ome. And that was the end of 'im—leastways as far as Poppy 'Arpsickle was concerned."

ERIC.



"ISN'T LONDON *WONDERFUL*? I'VE BEEN HERE TEN DAYS AND I HAVEN'T SEEN ALL OF IT YET."

Litter

I LIKE the English crowd;
  He who has learned their worth
Should, I maintain, be proud
  To be of English birth;
Their turn for simple chaff
  Is greatly to my liking,
And if it rains they laugh,
  Which in itself is striking.

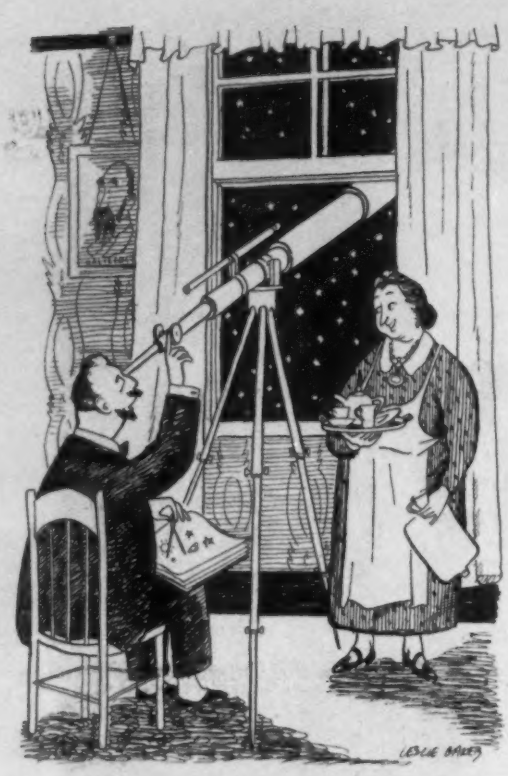
Their gay souls never droop,
  And they've a kindly heart
For females in the soup,
  For children in the cart;
Though they be packed as tight
  As pilchards in a barrel,
They don't bewail their plight;
  It merely makes them carol.

Yes, I could spend whole days
  (If such was my desire)
In ladling out hot praise
  On these, whom I admire;
Yet at one point I'm stuck,
  One flaw that makes all bitter,
And that's the way they muck
  The place up with their litter.

Where'er they chance to pass
  They scatter for their sins
Bottles and broken glass,
  Paper and empty tins;
Strong warnings they ignore;
  Holding it meet and proper,
They do it all the more
  And never care a copper.

Yet they stand out so clear,
  So rich in our esteem,
They come in fact so near
  To one's most lofty dream,
Who knows what heights they'd reach
  Did they resolve to buck up,
And with stern vigour teach
  Themselves to clear that muck up?

DUM-DUM.



"YOU OUGHT TO FIND A LOT OF FRESH ONES FROM THE SPARE ROOM, MR. ROSS."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

The Home of the Whigs

THE history of the great pile that was Cope's Castle under JAMES I. and still survives as Holland House has been told by Princess LIECHTENSTEIN in the 'seventies. But so much new material is available that a new history of *The Home of the Hollands* (MURRAY, 18/-) has every justification. Apart from the charm of THORPE's building, Holland House excels in the political enterprise of so many of its sons and the incurable romanticism of their daughters and wives. Lord ILCHESTER has given prominence to all three interests; and it is curious to discover among his womenfolk more than one of the heroines of HARDY. HARDY's grandfather built the tomb for Lady SUSAN O'BRIEN (*née* HOLLAND) and her actor; and the only picturesque scandal the novelist seems to have missed is the even more Hardyesque story of the wife of the third Lord. Among many new letters is an unusually generous comment of BYRON on his separation from his wife: "Where there is wrong, it may be fairly divided between her relatives and myself, and when there is right she has the monopoly." A resumption of the chronicle —which closes in the eighteen-twenties—is something to be awaited.

A Cowl for Janus

It is to be hoped there will be many more books on the lines of *Brother Petroc's Return* (CHATTO AND WINDUS, 6/-), for this otherworldly little story is of a kind in itself both rare and desirable. The late Monsignor BENSON's hermit, *Richard Raynal*, is the obvious forerunner of *Brother Petroc*; but "S. M. C."—the initials, we are told, hide the identity of a Dominican nun—is strong where BENSON was weak and weak where he was strong. She invents a young Benedictine whose animation was miraculously suspended between the suppression of his Cornish monastery in 1549 and its revival in 1929; and her main preoccupation is the strangeness which a typically Tudor type discovers in contemporary personalities and in the Counter-Reformation accent of contemporary Catholicism. Her manner is neither picturesque nor moving; and as her bias is rather theological than religious her graceful narrative tends to lack vitality. *Brother Petroc's* fellow-monks and a handful of worldlings, who mainly exist to provide him with matter for mortification, are adequately—in one case almost maliciously—handled; but he himself is little more than a pleasant pretext for a soundly-conceived indictment of modern complexity.

Good Wine

Something not wholly new, for his work is largely in the tradition of the mightiest of the Victorians, but fresh and almost unknown in recent novels makes the appearance of Mr. VAUGHAN WILKINS' *And So—Victoria* (CAPE, 8/6) an event. With a great knowledge of the highways and byways of history and a gift for mixing fact and fiction attractively, he has written a long, picturesque, dashing, adventurous story of the early nineteenth century and, in spite of some odd patches in the dialogue where the language of the films poses as the English of a hundred years ago, it is a remarkable achievement. The turns and twists of his complicated story; his hero's desperate encounters with life; the descriptions of scenes and manners in England, Germany, America; above all the procession of brilliantly-drawn characters, real and imaginary, which passes through his pages will recommend the book to anyone not wholly wedded to "modern" fiction. The publishers are at pains to tell us what famous men have in the past lived in the author's rooms in the Adelphi; it seems the oddest possible bush for such very good wine.



PRIVATE VIEW

"Fairy Lands Forlorn"

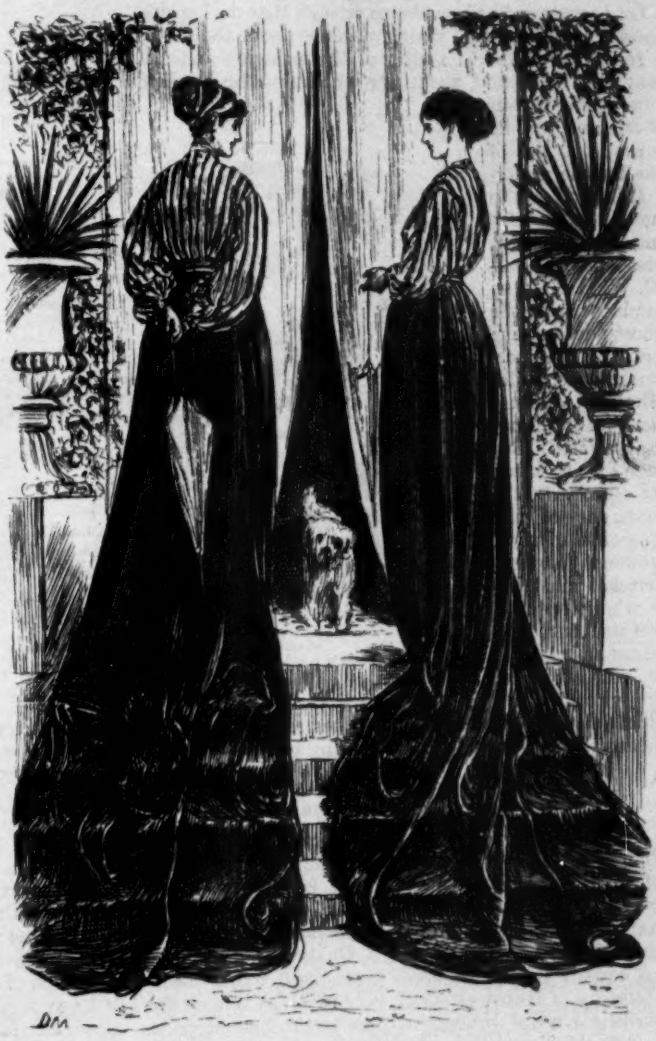
Brief Flower of Youth (LONGMANS, 7/6) is first-prize winner in the Oxford and Cambridge Novel Competition. In it Mr. GRAHAM HEATH, a twenty-three-year-old author, describes the affection of a little English boy for the Germany of the fairy stories, goes on to tell of his year in a German co-educational school, of his going up to Oxford, his return to the Germany of the Nazis and his love-affair with the anti-Nazi daughter of a pastor. The most remarkable things about the book are the balanced judgment and the cool directness of the writing. *Richard* (Mr. HEATH'S spokesman) is an earnest young man and perhaps a bit of a prig, but he keeps both heart and head in good order. His remark, as an anti-Nazi, "No, I'm not a Communist; as a matter of fact I'm English," is a good motto for an undergraduate. This is not a happy book, for the author pauses to pity so often, but it is full of hope and a steady sort of romanticism. May we soon see what Mr. HEATH is going to do next.

A Rod-Case Thick With Labels

One of the most enviable of men must be Mr. LEANDER J. MCCORMICK, who is an angler possessed of the means and leisure to fulfil the common dream of fishing the right water at the right time, irrespective of geography. The jealousy of the less-favoured, however, can be tempered with gratitude that one so lucky should pass on a measure of his good fortune in an admirably written book, reflecting an open mind and a sense of humour—*Fishing Round the World* (DUCKWORTH, 12/6). Almost every sort of game-fish has fallen to the author's rod, from the over-educated trout of the Test to the broadbill of Catalina and the Mako shark of New Zealand; but he is no purist, having even gone so far in his desire to experience everything as trying for crocodile with chicken! Without success. Nile perch, so often praised, he found insipid sport; for big-game fish he gives the palm to New Zealand and not to Florida; and quite rightly he deplores the mechanical ingenuity of modern tackle which more and more loads the chances against the fish. Many anglers will sympathise with his view that it is the size of a fly rather than its colour which has meaning for a trout, while many others will doubtless condemn him as a heretic; but all of them should enjoy his book.



DO YOU REMEMBER THESE?



A REMARKABLE STUDY FROM NATURE

George du Maurier, Punch, June 1st, 1867

Plain Tale of China

After a surfeit of frank and sensational fiction it is somewhat of a relief to meet Mr. RICHARD LA PIERE, who is studiously correct and quiet in his utterance. In *Son of Han* (HEINEMANN, 7/6) he tells the life-story of *Little Dragon*, who had a soft heart for women and a talent for passing examinations. The period is that of the Great Age of China, when

foreigners were beginning to appear in the Middle Kingdom. It is assumed that the reader is familiar with the atmosphere and the furnishings. Hence no attempt is made to describe externals. We are marooned in a rather remote world of pure feeling. The book is written with care and conscience and suited to all who prefer a slow pace in their novels. There are dangers in the method, however, for now and again peace threatens to degenerate into coma. None the less it is a real book and its author has added something to literary technique.

The Field of Play

Mr. FRED ROOT has, he states, been "in the very heart of first-class cricket" for nearly forty years, and *A Cricket Pro's Lot* (ARNOLD, 5/-) is evidence enough that during this long period he has formed strong opinions about the game. With regard to the rival merits of the swinging and the spinning ball, Mr. ROOT, as anyone who knows his bowling will expect, is in favour of the swinger, and he gives the soundest of reasons for the preference. It is good also to see that GEORGE GUNN is included among his six best batsmen and that C. W. L. PARKER finds a place among the six most destructive bowlers, for innumerable cricketers consider that the skill of these professionals was not fully appreciated. But although it is often easy to agree with the shrewdness of Mr. ROOT's points of view, his statement that first-class cricket must become wholly professional if its future is to be successful will arouse protests from many who by no stretch of imagination can be called die-hards. Several of the illustrations are worthy of an aspiring bowler's study.



"HAVE YOU EVER BEEN ON THE AIR?"
"I'VE BEEN LIVING ON IT, LADDIE, FOR YEARS."

The Purifier of Prisons

Are we in danger of forgetting the services to mankind rendered by that valiant woman, the purifier of Newgate and reformer of prisons in general? If so, here is Mrs. JANET WHITNEY to the rescue, with her life of *Elizabeth Fry* (HARRAP, 12/6) to remind us of what we owe to that Quaker heroine. Mrs. WHITNEY, herself a Quaker and (what is perhaps equally important here) a practised writer, deals with the story of BETSY GURNEY very much as though she were writing a novel, opening with a picturesque scene in spring, with the Norwich coach toiling up the road towards Lynn and the seven daughters of JOHN GURNEY of Earlham lined up on the road, arms firmly linked, determined to stop the London mail for a joke; for these GURNEYS of Earlham, of whom AUGUSTUS HARE wrote so pleasantly forty years ago, were decidedly "Gay" Quakers. Our author makes good use of Mr. HARE's book and also of the various journals kept by all eleven members of the Earlham tribe, save only the eldest son. We learn many secrets of BETSY's youth, of her first meeting with WILLIAM SAVERY, the American Quaker, who first stirred her religious side, and of the varied feelings she experienced towards her persistent suitor, JOSEPH FRY. She was thirty-two when she began her Newgate work, which led to the reformation of the convict ships transporting women to Australia, the provision of libraries for coastguards, and the training of nurses. Domestically she bore eleven children and suffered in her later years considerable financial anxiety. But though her husband's bank had to close its doors, ELIZABETH FRY's heart remained open to the end.

Many Foundations

By arranging *Our Great Public Schools* (WARD, LOCK, 10/6) in alphabetical order, Captain F. A. M. WEBSTER has cleverly avoided discussions and disputes about "priority of foundation or present-day importance." With unflagging industry and zest he has tackled a difficult task, and in this record of over thirty schools copious and reliable information can be found. Perhaps in some cases he invites the criticism that too much space is devoted to games; for lists of athletes, however distinguished, must inevitably lose some of their lustre in the course of time and make rather dull reading. But when writing of such schools as Eton and Winchester he has so much traditional material at his command that even the STUDDS, LYTTELTONS and ASHTONS are not mentioned. Illustrations, excellently reproduced, supply a welcome addition to a useful and informative volume.

Who Killed the Cat

On the end-papers of *Murder of a Matriarch* (HEINEMANN, 7/6) Mr. HUGH AUSTIN stimulates the readers' vanity by stating that no unfair tricks of the trade are used and that all clues are given at exactly the same time as they come to the attention of the detective. All the same it is a bit doubtful if many people will discover who killed Comfort, the cat, and (later on) its mistress—a domestic tyrant who was so odious that each member of her family had every excuse for murdering her. All these people—particularly the small boy, *Jed*, and his sister—are cleverly shown off by the author, for Mr. AUSTIN is an excellent puzzle-maker and an equally good portrayer of character, and his detective, *Peter Quint*, shows again that he is blessedly unlike the usual detective of fiction.

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Charivaria

"Miss Gracie Fields could lead community-singing successfully anywhere," says an enthusiastic correspondent. We should like to be there when she makes an attempt in the Members' Stand at Lord's.

* * *

"Troops take three hours to pass Mussolini," reads a heading. Naturally no one had the courage to ask him to stand to one side.

* * *

Which reminds us that as a reprisal for the Italian ban on certain British newspapers it is rumoured that the Government is considering admitting to Britain only those Italian newspapers which criticise Mussolini.

* * *

"The factors determining the capacity of a conductor are:
(*a*) The shape of the conductor.
(*b*) The size of the conductor.
(*c*) The presence of other conductors nearby."
From Text-book on Electrostatics.

And, of course, (*d*) the digestion of the conductor.

* * *



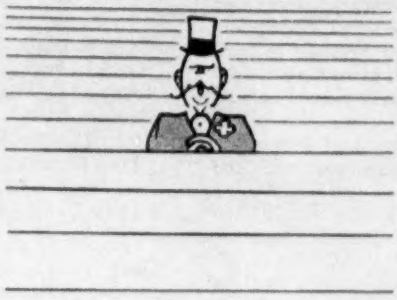
In the opinion of a famous artists' model, Society women are often merely hangers upon which a multitude of garments are arranged. Just like cricket umpires.

* * *

A scientist says that cement dykes will show such large gaps in winter that one can put one's hands into them, but that the gaps will completely disappear in summer owing to the expansion of the cement. In the circumstances it is recommended that the hands be withdrawn during the spring.

* * *

A new burglar-alarm releases a flashlight, rings a bell and takes a photograph of the room and the intruder. Nothing whatever is said about making him a cup of tea.



A disillusioned author has been advising youths not to set out with the idea of writing for money. There is no indication so far that schoolboys are taking his advice.

* * *

"Many thousands of frogs are eaten in London; but this fact is not generally known."—*Daily Paper.*

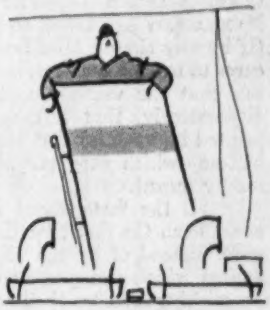
The trouble is, they *will* write menus in French.

* * *

A West-End music-hall artist plays a piano with his toes. He is of course a relative of the man who fiddles with his moustache.

* * *

"What would happen," a correspondent asks, "if a Poet Laureate failed to produce a Coronation Ode?" We can only suppose that his poetic licence would be endorsed.



* * *

A stowaway found on an ocean liner weighed eighteen stone. Presumably he had been making a practice of stowing away for years.

* * *

Hollywood film executives, we are reminded, seldom welcome critical opinions from their underlings. These are usually well advised to cut the cackle and come to the yesses.

* * *

Our Own Little Tribute

"The Queen at Buckingham Palace to-day received from the Worshipful Company of Funmakers the fan which has been specially made by them for the Coronation."—*Yorks Paper.*

* * *

An explorer says that whales can remain submerged in shallow water and go to sleep. Many human beings seem similarly gifted just before breakfast-time.



Slaves of the Public

EVERYBODY loves a film-star. The daily lives of Hollywood's glittering galaxy, what JANET GAYNOR eats and whether WILLIAM POWELL wears elastic-sided boots—these are matters of great moment to us all. When Father whips open the morning paper and holds it in that irritating way of his so that Mother can only read the back-page upside-down, while Freddie and little Angelina, pressing in from either hand, are hard put to it to catch more than a sideways word here and there, his snorts and sudden excited whimperings no longer betray a deep consciousness of the Government's futility or the prospect of immediate warfare in the Balkans. He is keeping in touch with the Film-world.

"What is it, dear?" asks Mother, whose comely face never looks so well as when seen upside-down between the coffee-pots on a bright June morning.

"KATHERINE HEPBURN's pet alligator is suffering from indisposition," he reads out, "and the famous star is prostrate with grief."

"*The* HEPBURN, dear, surely?" she corrects with a sympathetic glance, and the children pause in their rhythmic chewing of Oata-Bene (DURANTE Dotes on It) to inquire whether the production of *A Hobo in Arcadia* is likely to be held up in consequence.

Father doesn't know, but at least he can tell them that CLARK GABLE'S favourite fruit is pineapple and that MYRNA LOY has taken to smoking a hookah on location. (If by any chance Miss LOY does *not* smoke a hookah and cares to bring a libel action on the strength of it, I can only say that the words complained of were not printed, or, alternatively, that if they were printed they were not printed by me, and that anyway, even if they were printed by me—which they palpably were not—they were very kindly meant.)

Of all the facts about film-stars which impress me—apart from the fact that they reckon their incomes by the week instead of by the year and still manage to produce figures which put you and me to shame—I think their astonishing industry thrills me most. The way those people work! Here is a day in the life of ROBERT TAYLOR (what a profile, Gladys—what a profile!), written out by himself, reprinted in *The Sunday Express*, and now shamelessly reproduced by myself for the benefit of a wider public:—

7 A.M. to 8 A.M.—Gymnasium work-out, bath and breakfast.

8 to 8.30.—Drive to the studio, with stop at mother's house to say "Good morning."

8.30 to 1.—Work.

1 P.M. to 2 P.M.—Lunch at studio.

2 to 4.30.—Work.

4.30 to 6.30.—Home, cleaning up, reading mail, etc.

6.30 to 8.30.—Dinner.

8.30 to 9.—Drive home if dining out, or telephone friends.

9 to 11.—Study to-morrow's lines.

11 to 12 midnight.—Write letters, read, or monkey with short-wave radio.

12 to 7.—Sleep.

There is a day of strenuous endeavour at which Smith, Jones and Robinson may well hang their heads in silence. By 8.30 he is at work—half an hour earlier than Jones, who probably did not stop at his mother's house to say "Good morning," and a clear hour before Smith and Robinson, who show few signs in the train to London Bridge of having had a gymnasium work-out before breakfast. If the truth be known, the dullards very likely have no gymnasium. From 8.30 to 4.30 ROBERT TAYLOR is hard at it, smiling bravely, kissing JOAN CRAWFORD or turning his profile this way and that as some brutal director may direct. After that you might have thought the poor man would get some rest. But no. He goes home, he washes, he reads letters, for two laborious hours he wrestles with his dinner. Then another drive home, unless he is already there, in which case he spares a brief half-hour to telephone his friends. I wonder what he says to them. Most of his conversation, I think, consists of refusing their friendly invitations. "I should have loved to, Miss GARBO, but I shall be busy cleaning myself up at five to-morrow, and after that, you see, I always read my mail;" or, "Eight-forty-five, did you say, SPENCER? What a pity! I have to be at the telephone at that time. What? Yes, telephoning friends. They expect it, you know, unless I'm driving home. No, no. Later is impossible, I'm afraid. I have to study my lines and monkey with the short-wave radio. I said 'short-wave.' No, it isn't essential, but it's either that or writing letters. Yes, exactly; in answer to the ones I've been reading from five to six-thirty. Isn't it a bore? But I knew you'd understand. Good-bye, old chap, good-bye. I must ring up CHARLIE CHAPLIN and BARBARA STANWYCK now."

The only person I can think of, apart from other film-stars, whose day is so crammed with obligations to the exclusion of all leisure as to be at all comparable with that of ROBERT TAYLOR is my friend Augustus Pinn, the author. Here is the time-table which he has been good enough to send me. It was only, he tells me, by cutting out the sweet at lunch that he was able to find a moment to write it out:—

8.30.—Get up, wash, shave, brush teeth, put on dressing-gown, etc.

9 to 10.—Breakfast.

10 to 11.30.—Read papers, write letters, and remember to say "Good morning" to wife.

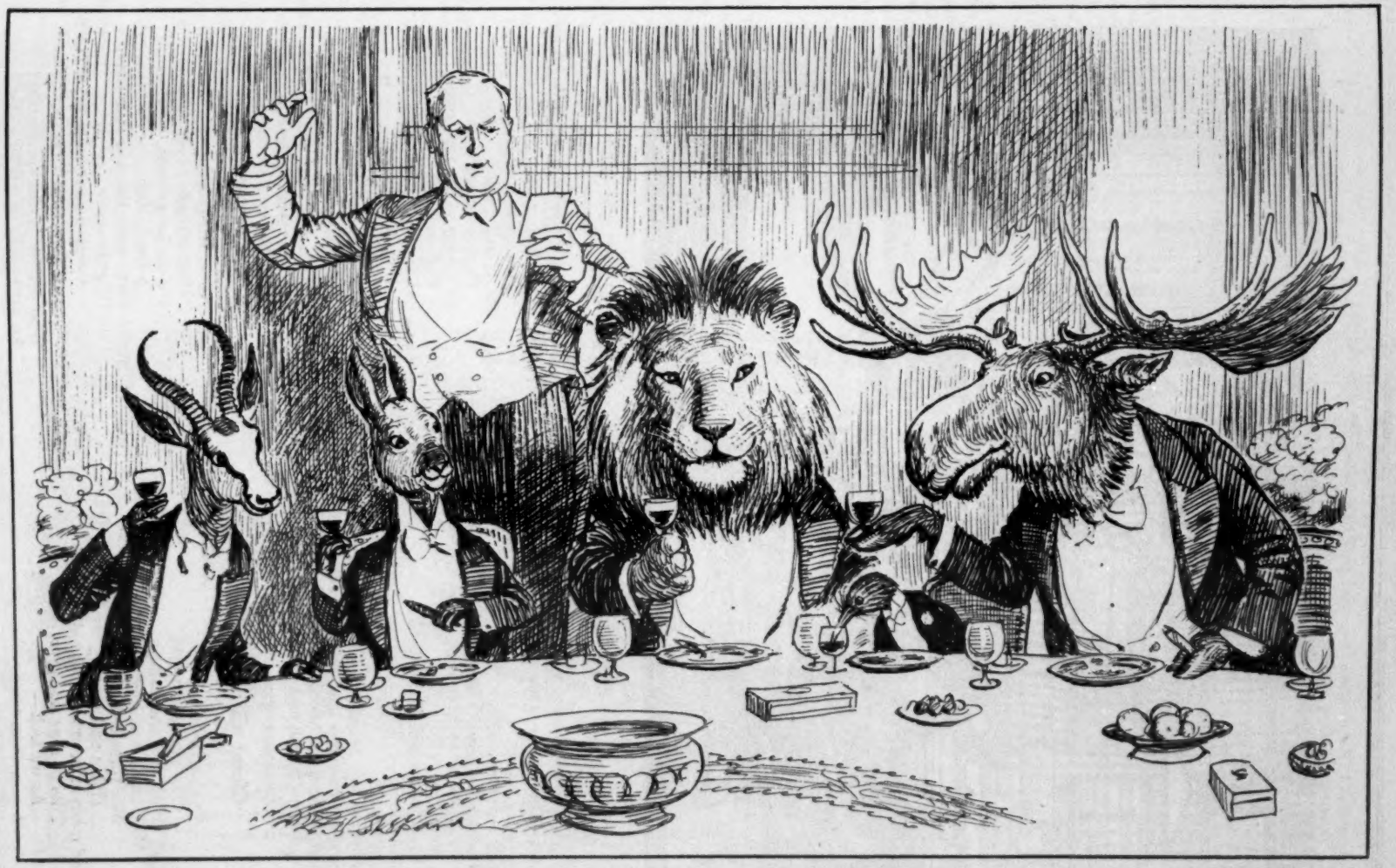
11.30 to 1.—Authorship.

1 to 2.—Lunch (note the close parallel here with ROBERT TAYLOR).

2 to 5.30.—Work-out on golf-course, etc.



"I CAN *STILL* SEE A TEENY BIT, MR. BULSTRODE."



THE SENSIBLE DINNER-PARTY

TOAST-MASTER INSKIP. "GENTLEMEN—THE TOAST IS IMPERIAL DEFENCE."
THE DINERS. "AND LET'S MEET OFTENER AND OFTENER!"



"Do you wish to know my *precise* age, Sir Hubert?"

5.30 to 7.30.—Drive home, answer telephone, if it rings, etc., etc.
7.30 to 8.30.—Dinner.
8.30 to 10.30.—Drive to "Three Feathers" and drive home again, or, if unable to drive home, telephone friends, taxi-ranks, police, etc.
10.30 to 12.—Answer wife if she speaks.
12 to 8.30.—Sleep.

I hope that these two schedules will cause any young man or woman who imagines that actors or authors have an easy time to think again. Some day I will publish my own daily programme. It will make you gasp. H. F. E.

Cloud Clipper

Beneath our wing
The modelled world,
With ribs and valleys,
Lakes and lands
And threads of rivers
(Plain and purled)
And roads in loops and lines and bands,
Tilts or slips sideways
As we look—
A page from some
Titanic book.

The shadow of
Our flying hulk
Blots half a hill
Or river-mead,
Or swings where toy-trains
Puff and sulk
To race their dwarfed retarded speed,
And insect horses,
Startled, stir
A pinpoint as
Our engines purr.

The vast blue fly-leaf
Of the sky
As we look downwards
Closes up
Across our eyes—
But leisurely,
For we have drunk
A heady cup
And seem to share the slow mild mirth
Of gods above
A chessboard earth,

Who ponder moves spectacular:
An earthquake or a falling star.

R. C. S.

A Board for War

By Professor Boch-Lager (That Eminent Authority)

I HAVE no desire to rest during my declining years under the stigma of traitor or of crank. It is therefore imperative that I explain in greater detail why I welcome the present war and favour its continuance on an efficient and permanent footing—not in Spain, indeed, but over that more convenient terrain, the Sahara.

For a war of this nature, appealing as it does to all classes of the community in all quarters of the globe, provides an ideal solution of the unemployment problem. There is scarcely a country which has not already sent quantities of surplus goods and population to this quite unsaturatable market: meat, wheat, potatoes, cotton-spindles, mouth-organs, etc., and otherwise destitute and unemployable citizens to serve on both sides. But the process of export is so far spasmodic and ill-organised, especially in the democratic countries. Private enterprise has still to be systematised in accordance with the policy of a central authority.

To achieve persistent and rational non-intervention (I use the new sense of the word) it is essential to set up some form of International War Marketing Board to run a continuous war in the Sahara, to stimulate and systematise waste by means of subsidies where necessary, and to ensure a fair return from the consumer. Moreover, victory for either side will have to be sternly restricted. The Board must take powers to enlist international non-intervention against an aggressor who shows signs of surrendering and thus bringing the war to a close.

Critics who have suggested that I am anxious to foment an uncontrolled international conflict will now confess, if they are honest, that my proposals are the surest means of preventing it. I am not one of those who hold that the problem would best be liquidated by the promotion of a large-scale war. The machinery of a Board may be cumbrous, but a general world war would not only be difficult to stop or to regulate but it might achieve far more than a satisfactory economic equilibrium for all.

The Board's secondary objective must be the prevention of such widespread hostilities by means of the compulsory localising of all potential wars and their incorporation in the Sahara Plan. This will serve the further purpose of keeping the war from languishing, a contingency very likely to arise when the supply of cosmopolitan ideologies gives out.

The Board must be enabled

(1) To intervene in any dispute likely to lead to non-intervention between any two Powers and to arrange for delegations of each to serve on opposite sides in the Sahara.

(2) To open up new sections of the Sahara for each new war. Sites should be clearly labelled and placed out of bounds for Professor HALDANE, British M.P.'s and the Christian Left.

Let me close with a concrete example. We will suppose that Sweden has deported some eggs into Finland below the cost of the Finnish home-laid-article. The Finns, scorning the foreign yolks, repatriate them below the cost of Swedish untravelled eggs in the Swedish market. The atmosphere grows sulphurous.

It is at this juncture that the Board would non-intervene. A Swedo-Finn Front would be marked out and unemployed volunteers induced by the loss of their insurance benefit to take an enthusiastic interest. In course of time the eggs too would arrive at the seat of war in a liquid condition and labelled "Chinese." The dispute would have been kept within reasonable bounds and a world-war averted, nor would either side suffer from an unfavourable balance of trade in conjunction with a saturated labour market.



"NOW, SIR, YOUR FATHER DON'T PAY £300 A YEAR IN SCHOOL FEES TO HAVE YOU FLICKING AT BALLS JUST OUTSIDE THE OFF STUMP."

From the Ish Anthology

IV.

QUOTATION

"NOTHING is here for Thiers,"
As the poste-restante clerk
Said to the celebrated statesman.*

FINANCE AND INDUSTRY

"That unwholesome greed
To get rich quickly. . . ."

And what about the greed
To get rich slowly?

That lasts a lifetime.
Give me speed any day.

Besides,
Our methods of making money
Won't, in the end,
Harm our reputation,

So long as we take good advice
About whom to give it away to.

BY NO MEANS EASY

"At last," said the Ish traveller
As he watched a man laying a stair-carpet,
"I understand your expression
'Hard as nails.'"

* As the reader will deduce, this is by no means a literal translation. It is a free rendering designed to give the same impression as the original, which actually says nothing about M. THIERS or the poste-restante clerk. Probably I shall translate it again later and you won't know it's the same one. To be quite honest I translated it once before.—R. M.

SOLEMN THOUGHT

Remember that possibly,
Somewhere,
Once,

Lovers existed
Who were as ready to misunderstand
As characters in fiction.

After all, somebody
Must have given the boys the idea.
But Gosh, what a life!

NEGLECTED GEM

Years and years ago
It was reported
That the two phrases
Most popular in America were—

"And how!" and
"Sold to the man with the heavy beard!"

Well, there is now
Almost no English-speaking household
Into which "And how!"
Has not penetrated.

But the other?
The one with more action,
More human interest,
More poetry, more rhythm,
More words?

Maybe that's the trouble.

ORIGINS

Of course it's no business of mine,
But I have always wondered
What Miss JESSIE L. WESTON,
Author of *From Ritual to Romance*,
Thought about
Her responsibility
For *The Waste Land*.

Then there's HOMER
And Mr. JOYCE'S *Ulysses*.
I should duck the job
Of explaining to him the connection.

NOT WHOLLY DISTINCT

And talking of *The Waste Land*,
There's another poem
In Mr. ELIOT'S note to line 218
Of that work—

"Just as the one-eyed merchant,
Seller of currants,
Melts into the Phœnician sailor,
And the latter is not wholly distinct
from
Ferdinand Prince of Naples. . . ."

Get a load of
Them associations!

One of these days I shall say
To somebody:
"You are not wholly distinct from
Ferdinand Prince of Naples."
His dismay,
If visible,
Should be comical to witness.

PROGRESS

"It means more work."

Of old, spoken sulkily,
An excuse;
To-day, spoken cheerfully,
A happy discovery.

HISTORICAL INTERLUDE

When all is gloomy,
When the skies weep,
When everybody looks, and I feel,
Like hell,

I make it a rule to think
About the Aztecs.
They were a nation
Of cocoa-drinkers.

The Emperor
Used to have fifty golden goblets
Of cocoa
A day.

This thought is a talisman
Against melancholy.
If you are able to tell me it is wrong,
Forbear.

DATE TROUBLE

But in the study of history I suffer
From incurable levity of mind.

How, for instance, can I
With adequate solemnity



"GOSH! ARE YOU P. K.'S MATER?"

Regard the mighty deeds
Of JULIUS CÆSAR,

Who is alleged to have performed
Some tremendous action
In such a miniature toy-like year as 55, or
47?

Shucks! R. M.

Babel

CAN you speak Chechen, Avaroandi, Kazikumukh, Dargwaa or Archi? Do you know a word of Udi or Himalug? Can you make yourself understood in Adighe, Kabard, Cherkess, Ubikh or Abkhaz? Or, to put it briefly, are you acquainted with any of the languages embraced by the Chechenolesgian and Abasgokerketian language groups? "No!" Then what on earth are you going to do if you find yourself in Northern Caucasia?

For years you have prided yourself on being an educated man on the strength of a smattering of French and Latin. But could you even say "Good-day" in Bodo, Kachin or Lo Lo? This fact would immediately stamp you as an ignoramus and possibly a cad in both Tibet and Burma.

"Do I know a word of any of these languages?"

Of course not. But that is dodging the question. Remember why SOCRATES was called the wisest of the Athenians. You were not even aware of your linguistic shortcomings till I pointed them out to you.

To continue our investigation: Can you speak Shoshone Comanchee, Ute-Chemihuevi, Mono-Bannock, Tubatulabal, Hopi, Lower Pina, Teguima, Yaqui, Tarahumare, Quichola, Chora, Tepecano, Tlascaltec, Chumasan, Yana, Walapai, Tonto, Yavapai-Mohave, Tequistlatecan, Xinca, Washo, Tlapenec-Yopi, Menominee, Kickapoo, Potowatami, Penobscot, Passamaquoddy, Yankton, Yanktonnai, Coos, Kalapaya, Pomo, Wintun or Maidu?

The answer is, I think, "No."

Now that you have been beaten into a suitably abject state of mind by this display of superior knowledge, I may reveal its source. I have been studying the language tables in an encyclopædia.

A first study of these tables reveals an interesting fact, *i.e.*, that there must have been at least five hundred workmen engaged in the construction of the Tower of Babel.

There is a nasty little asterisk dodging about the columns. That asterisk is responsible for blighting a new-born aspiration. Just as I had decided to spend my next vacation in Texas in order to learn Coahuiltecan, I spotted this horrible asterisk nestling in the Sub Family Column against that lovely name. Then at the bottom of the page: "An asterisk indicates a dead language." So my hopes of listening to Coahuiltecan, as manifested in the sub-languages Coahuilteca, Carancawa and Toncawa, were withered.

Also to be numbered among the departed are Geez, Pahlavi, Sogdian, Conestoga and Natick. What a loss to an already impoverished world! Geez alone presented untold possibilities.

To think I was once proud of speaking *English*, which turns out to be merely a form of Low German. How can one boast of speaking the tongue that SHAKESPEARE used when, if one had been born on the Gulf of Fonseca, one would have spoken Mange?

Various collections of savages to whom central-heating and the bath are unknown have the bulge on us. How noble a thing to speak Agaw, Tho, Black Tai, White Tai, Ge, Hicheti or Apalanchee Seminole.

The saddest thought of all is that they more than likely do not realise that they are privileged and are proud of speaking inaccurately a dialect of Low German.



"'AVIN' NO WISH TO QUARREL, MRS. R., I'LL SAY NO MORE ABAHT YER, BUT YOU 'RE WELCOME TO READ ME THOUGHTS."

Round the Fleet;

or, Do not Speak to the Man at the Wheel.

"You're not going to tinker with these ropes *again*, Claud? Isn't there anywhere in this boat one can sit without having to move every time we turn round?"

"Claud, is that the *Drotning Victoria*?"

"Get up a moment, darling; you're sitting on the Plan."

"It says it's Latvian."

"Nonsense, Sylvia! Latvia is inland—isn't it, Claud?"

"Claud, I've just been down with Angela and she says will you be an angel and *stay* on this tack for another twenty minutes, because she's just put the kettle on to boil and the Primus works so much better when the boat's leaning this way."

"Claud darling, could you do something awfully clever and *stop* this front sail from flapping about? I want to take a photo of that ship with a thing like the Eiffel Tower on it, and the sail keeps getting in the way."

"Of course I knew perfectly well he was killed in his bath, only it seems a funny reason for calling a ship after him. Doesn't it, Claud?"

"Why shouldn't we wave back if they wave to us? I'm no more a Communist than you are, but those ones standing on the back end had *such* sweet faces. Didn't you see that one's face with the guitar, Claud?"

"Darling, do you think that yacht in front knows it has to give way to us? Of course I know you know more about it than I, Claud, but—What—it hasn't? Well, then, oughtn't you to? I mean, we specially don't want to run into the *Royal Sovereign* because Sylvia's brother-in-law is on board it. You know, the one with those frightful teeth that Letty married."

"Ready About."

"Ready about what, darling? D'you mean we're going to have one of those awful moments when everything *flaps*? Oh—— Honestly, Claud, do be careful! That great mast thing that swings about when you turn round like that nearly hit me."

"Claud, Angela says couldn't we hide behind one of those enormous square ships that look like Olympia so that no one would *see* we were in the area, and then pop out just when the Royal Yacht came by and see it close to?"

"It says in the paper PRINCESS ELIZABETH is going to be made an Admiral."

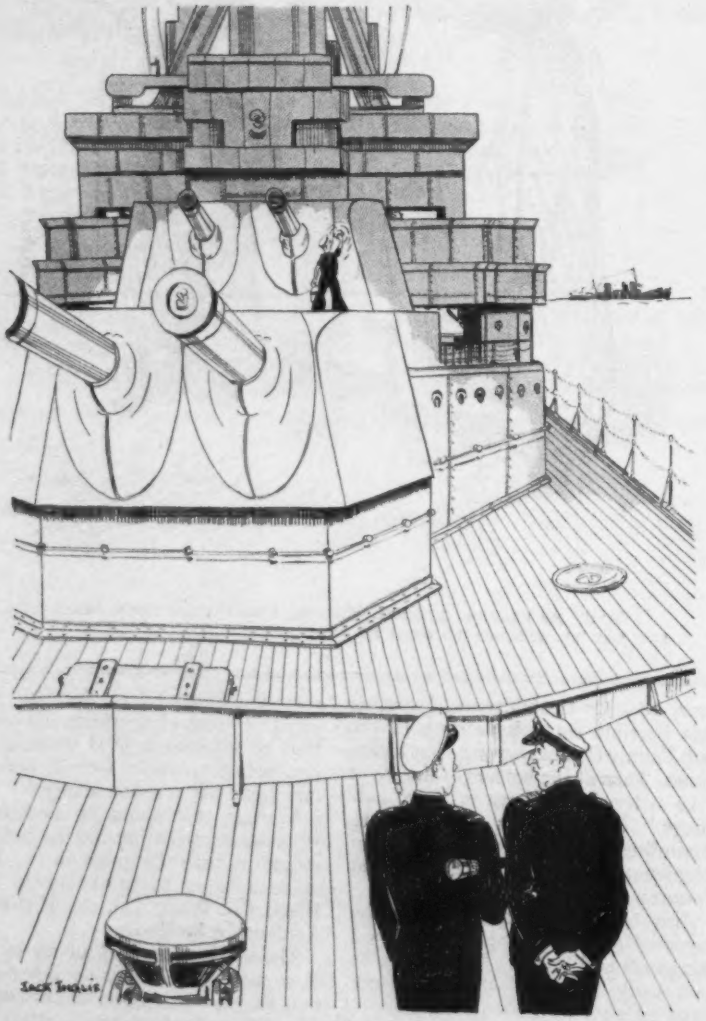
"Well, I hope she is. Don't you, Claud? She'd look enchanting in a cocked hat."

"Sylvia, Claud says would you not sit on the sheets? I can't see anything remotely like a sheet anywhere near where you're sitting, so I shouldn't bother to move; it's probably just Claud getting in a fuss."

"Was QUEEN VICTORIA an Admiral?"

"My dear, I'm perfectly certain she never wore a cocked hat? Did she, Claud?"

"Claud, I know you're fearfully busy steering and everything, but would you be a darling and help me with the focus of this camera? I'm not sure if the ship I want to take is a hundred or two hundred feet away. A hundred, I should think. Just look round over your shoulder a minute and tell me what you think. It's that big liner coming up just behind us I want to take. There! She's just blown her horn. Do you think she wants to overtake us?"



"I UNDERSTAND, SIR, THAT HIS MOTHER WAS *TERRIBLY* HOUSE-PROUD."

THE PRESS-GANG AT SPITHEAD



THE PRESS WAS ASSISTED ON BOARD.



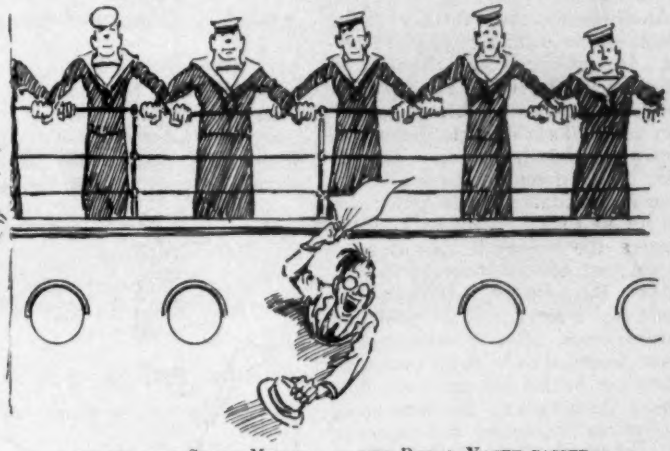
IT GREATLY ADMIRED THE BAYONETS AND THINGS—



AND WAS CAREFUL TO SALUTE THE WRONG PEOPLE.



IT SCATTERED CIGARETTE-ASH IN SACROSANCT SPOTS—



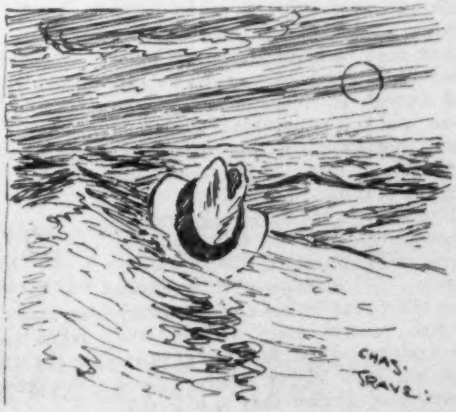
IT RUINED THE GREAT MOMENT AS THE ROYAL YACHT PASSED—



AND FINALLY IT ASKED ALL THE VERY SECRET QUESTIONS—



WHICH BROKE THE NAVAL CAMEL'S BACK.



AND SO THE LONG TRICK ENDED.

At the Pictures

SPENCER TRACY AND PADEREWSKI

THE problem, where the cardboard ends, which is always confronting us in spectacular films, and was perhaps seldom so perplexing as in the snowy mountain scenes in *Lost Horizon*, is again prominent in *Captains Courageous*, when the two fishing-smacks are racing home to Gloucester and one of them is wrecked. There is no doubt that for a while we are at sea, and there is no doubt that the extraordinary facilities of the studio have been called into action; but which is sea and which is studio is the question. In other words, where does the cardboard end and nature begin, where does nature end and cardboard begin again? And how are the photographs obtained? Where, in short, in *Captains Courageous*, was the camera-man's boat? Apart altogether from the story, these are matters for attention.

Another side-issue of this kind of film affects the versatility of the performers. In the course of a lifetime an actor for the legitimate stage plays a great many parts, but there is no risk: they are comfortable parts, dissociated from peril; they are indoors. But consider how different is the lot of the actor for the films: how uncomfortable can be the rôles assigned to him, the dangers, the weather! Take, for example, our old trustworthy friend, LIONEL BARRYMORE. If ever, you would say, a servant of the public, of mature years, after a distinguished career, deserved to be at his ease, with a fireplace behind his coat-tails, it is LIONEL BARRYMORE. Yet here he is, in *Captains Courageous*, the master of a fishing-smack off the Banks of Newfoundland, up to his knees in squirming cod and slimy halibut, and being buffeted every way by the roaring billows. The climatic conditions, I admit, may be capriciously and cinematically swift, from rough to smooth and smooth to rough; but they are there, and this admirable actor has to shout through them, pipe in mouth, and, while shouting, add another to his long list of achievements.

But the hero of *Captains Courageous* is not the skipper of the fishing-smack, nor is it FREDDIE BARTHOLOMEW, as *Harvey*, the purse-proud boy whose false belief that dollars can cure every ill and remove every scruple, was the mainspring of KIPLING'S story. FREDDIE is a clever actor, with a clearness of diction that is a model; but neither he nor LIONEL BARRYMORE, in his unaccustomed oilskins, does anything surprising. No, the surprise has been left for SPENCER TRACY. This fine utility-man, whom we have long known, on shore, in various parts, as lover, as newshawk, as tough guy generally, now suddenly



No. 1. A FILM VETERAN

Harvey . . FREDDIE BARTHOLOMEW

blossoms forth as a Portuguese sailor, romantic and practical, sage and humorous, under whose imaginative care the headstrong *Harvey* finds his better self, and who dies, like a true slave of the screen, half drowned by



No. 2. THE FILM NOVICE

IGNACE JEAN PADEREWSKI

an angry ocean and half crushed by a fallen mast. SPENCER TRACY'S acting is the surprise, for the film otherwise was promising to be just the old stuff.

We all have heard about *Hamlet* with the part of the melancholy Dane left out; but this is a version of the play which so far has not been presented. You can, however, realise what the effect of such a treatment would be if you go to the film *Moonlight Sonata*, and think of it as divested of PADEREWSKI. For if ever there was a one-man picture it is this. The supreme virtuoso begins to play as the curtain rises; he is playing at the close; and whenever he is not playing, there is the most negligible of plots.

But when he plays!

Many years ago, when PADEREWSKI was known as the "Human Chrysanthemum," and was lithe and lissom, and was mobbed by devotees, I used to hear him, at St. James's Hall, in BEETHOVEN and LISZT and CHOPIN and know that he was a great genius; and now, although he is old and white and stooping and less flowerlike than leonine, he is again playing, but this time for the cinema, BEETHOVEN and LISZT and CHOPIN, and is, possibly, even more of a genius than ever. And there is this added attraction, that the film can minutely exhibit the master's finger-work on the key-board, which in St. James's Hall we could not so closely observe. It seemed to me, as I watched *Moonlight Sonata*, that PADEREWSKI has all the old force, all the old tenderness, all the old rapture in understanding, and whenever he has to speak there is something touching and beautiful in his dignity. For the rest I fear I can say little. MARIE TEMPEST is, as ever, mistress of whatever scene she plays, with a sense of timing that should be a lesson for all; but there is nothing to it, and, believing not a whit in *Mario* the adventurer (and even less in his wardrobe), we are not interested in the adventure.

E. V. L.

Below the Belt

"There was a sensational end to the Andy Martin–Babe Smith fight in the city hall last night when, after seven rounds of even fighting, in the eighth, Martin, the American, brought the South African champion down with one of the most perfect punches to the shin ever seen in the Johannesburg ring."—*Natal Paper.*

"A Q.P. Opening.—Newick was left with a rook and a pawn against a rook and three yawns, and seeing the position was hopeless, he resigned."—*New Zealand Paper.*

They're so infectious.

A Headache for the Cartographer.

"A red silk flag, embroidered with Stalin's portrait, flies from a mast on the ice-floes 15 miles westward of the North Pole."

Sunday Dispatch.



THE BRITISH CHARACTER

PRONENESS TO SUPERSTITION

The Passing

["SCRAP METAL FOR SALE

The Council invite offers for Scrap Metal, including old steam-roller."—*Advt. in Liverpool Paper.*]

ROLL on, decrepit sad Steam-Roller, roll!
For the dishonoured scrap-heap is your goal.
Time even giants of metal true must tire
And cools their fire.

But may you in your brief retirement dream
Of doughty days when, filled with youthful steam,
Great stones were to the finest powder pressed
By your iron chest.

Dream of your whirling flywheel, shining brass;
Of noble horses who refused to pass
And, panic-stricken, heard your chimney tall
Out-snort them all!

Dream of the children never fearing harm,
Who found in you such interest, thrill and charm;
Dream of the miles of roads you helped to lay,
Stretching away!

Roller, your fate brings tears into my eyes.
I feel, if you were not so huge a size,
My garden not so small, I'd like to get
You for a pet.



Humane Visitor. "YOU'D THINK CUM ZUMMER THEY'D GIVE THEM LADS STRAW 'ATS."

Mr. Silvertop's Lesson

Mr. Silvertop drew a spoke-shave thoughtfully across his leathery palm.

"Such a perishing deal of 'umbug," he said, "gets talked these days about the beauties of being 'arnessed in a team that you might almost think it was some'ow un'oly to do a good job of work on your own and take the responsibility for it. I don't say as 'ow there isn't teams what a bloke's 'appy to work in, but take it by and long the best master to work for's always yourself. Unless you 'appens to be one of them pore fish what 'ardly blows their noses without somebody else tells 'em to.

"I 'ad the luck to learn my lesson early on," he continued, "and I made up my mind there and then I was a-going to earn my bread-and-butter with my 'ands and on my own."

"What was the lesson?" I asked him.

"Well, it was this way. My Mum 'ad a brother named 'Erbert, an old soldier 'oo'd been in so many scraps you'd never 'eard of up and down the world that 'is chest was 'arf covered in bunting, and when 'e 'ad all 'is medals up 'e sounded just like one of them carrylongs as 'e walked about. 'E 'ad a plum job as commissionaire to a big London stores, opening carriage-doors and saluting old girls as if they was generaliskimos, and 'is pockets used to get so full of sixpences they 'ad to 'ave new linings every month or so.

"Well, the stores was one of them what boasted they could get anything for anybody if given reasonable time, and when it come to my Uncle 'Erbert's ears that they was a-wanting a bright lad 'oo'd 'elp 'em 'unt, 'e recommends me and they takes me on. The manager I 'ad to deal with was one of them pompish little coves, always knowing a sight better than anybody else and never in the wrong. 'E might 'ave been a ruddy 'eadmaster.

"'You ought to be a very proud young feller,' 'e ses to me my first morning, 'to be let into such a fine old firm as this. You knows our motto—"A quart of wood-lice or a fleet of paddle-steamers, it's all the same to us"—never forget it.' A bit later 'e sends for me again and 'e ses, 'Ere's a chance for you, Silvertop, to show what you're made of. I've just 'ad a letter from one of our best customers, Lord 'Opscotch, asking us to find 'im 'arf-a-dozen 'elms as old as we can get 'em and different sizes. 'E's a retired admiral, so 'e knows what's what in 'elms. I'm a-going to leave the 'ole order in your 'ands. Money's no object to 'is Lordship, and 'e's a-coming in at five this afternoon, so mind you've fixed things by then. Now get to it.'

"I'd always 'ad it 'ammered into me as 'ow honesty was the best policy, so after I'd looked at 'im doubtful for a bit I ses, 'Very good of you, Sir, I'm sure. But what part of a ship ezactly *is* the 'elm?' At that 'e coloured up like 'ell, and I could see 'e 'adn't no more notion than what I 'ad—but catch 'im admitting it! 'I was told you was a lad of good edoocation,' 'e ses, very 'aughty, 'so I won't insult your teachers by telling you. 'Urry up there!'

"It was a fair poser, I can tell you. I went and sat on my 'igh-stool for a bit and turned it over in my 'ead, but I didn't get much further, what you might call my only voyage of note 'aving been an 'arf-hour's jolly in a tug round the Thames estuairy, so I goes outside to Uncle 'Erbert. 'Look 'ere,' I ses, 'some old blister's ordered 'elms, and they've got me fair beat. 'Ow much of a ship would you say they was—just the thing you push or all the rope and stuff as well what joins it to the rudder?'

"At the mention of a ship pore Uncle 'Erbert goes a kind of dull green and 'iccups a bit. 'Ever since that last nightmare of a trip back from Bombay,' 'e ses, 'I 'aven't been within five miles of the coast in case I might see one of them devilish things again,



"I WONDER WOULD YOU FRAME THIS?"

and so far I've managed to keep 'em out of my thoughts. So it's an 'ell of a lot you're asking, but I suppose I'd better do it for you.' And 'e stands there outside the stores, wrapped in thought, as you might say. But after a bit 'e was a-going such a reelly dangerous green that I begged 'im to switch 'is mind off ships once and for all, for we was fond of 'im and it didn't seem worth while.

"'I'll tell you what,' 'e ses as 'e makes a run for it, 'Cousin Ethel got spliced with a sailor 'oo must 'ave been an 'elmsman some time or other. 'E's got a pub at Wapping, the "Three Sheets in the Breeze." Ask 'im.'

"Which I did. I found Cousin Ethel's husband a-cleaning out 'is beer-engine; ever such a kindly old codger and a reel salt to 'is eyebrows. When I asks 'im about 'elms 'e whistles and tells me I've come to the right man. 'E'd 'andled every sort of 'elm there was, tillers and wheels was as much like 'ome to 'im as knives and forks. If I'd wait while 'e put on 'is boots 'e'd take me round the ship-breakers' yards straight away.

"Well, the old boy 'ad a reg'lar field-day, and by four o'clock I'd marked down 'arf-a-dozen 'elms of near every size and all rotten with age. So back I 'ares to the stores.

"'The manager's been a-yelling for you,' they tells me. 'E's got Lord 'Opscotch in there with 'im.' So in I goes. 'Ah, 'ere's the young man 'oo's been seeing about them antique steering-gears you asked for, your Lordship,' ses the manager.

"'Them what?' asks 'is Lordship, a red-dialled old geezer with creeper all over it.

"'Them 'arf-dozen assorted 'elms, as old as we could get 'em, your Lordship,' ses the manager, all oily. Then 'e ses to me, sharp-like, 'Well, Silvertop?'

"'I've took an option on arf-a-dozen reel good ones, Sir,' I ses. Lord 'Opscotch looks at me with a proper twinkle in 'is eye. 'I'd very much like to 'ear what you've got, young feller-me-lad,' ses 'e.

"'Very good, your Lordship,' I ses, and I brings out my list and reads it to 'im: 'One very small 'and-tiller off row-boat *Percy*; one small ditto off fishing-smack *Arethusa* of Gravesend; one bigger ditto off barge *Sweet William*; one small wheel with fittings off sloop *Arthur Jones* of Cardiff; one wheel complete in ma'ogany wheel-'ouse off brigantine *Solomon's Fancy* of 'Artlepool; one very big wheel complete with chains and gear from packet-steamer *'Ercules* of Dover.

"'That's the lot, your Lordship,' I ses, modest-like.

"'You don't say!' 'e ses. 'I 'opes you got 'em reasonable?'

"'Dirt-cheap,' I ses; 'the 'ole lot for seventy-two quid.'

"Well, at that the veins starts right out on 'is Lordship's neck and all of a sudden 'e bursts into a roar of laughter what very nearly brings down the ceiling.

"'I trust everything's to your Lordship's satisfaction?' asks the manager, looking sick as 'ell.

"'Everything's perfect,' gasps 'is Lordship, tears fair streaming down 'is dial. 'Only what I ordered wasn't dock-side rubbish but the other sort of 'elm.'

"'What, trees?' asks the manager, giving 'imself away at last.

"'No, battle-'ats what soldiers used to wear, of course,' roars Lord 'Opscotch. 'I said in my letter they was for a pageant.'

"'You 'aving been an Admiral I was a-thinking it would be a water-pageant, your Lordship,' mutters the manager, somewhere near Uncle 'Erbert's green. And at that Lord 'Opscotch nearly rolled off of 'is chair.

"Corlumme!" said Mr. Silvertop, "I didn't 'ave to be no tender plant to learn that lesson in being on my own."

ERIC.



"I SAY, ANGELA, DO YOU 'JIBBER' OR 'GIBBER'?"
"WHY, 'JIBBER,' YOU OWL."
"WELL, DON'T THEN; IT GETS ON MY NERVES."

Eating Song

(Modern Style)

Ho! landlord, give us of your best to-day,
Bring roasted vitamins, B, F and J;
And then go down into your choicest vaults
And broach a keg or two of mineral salts.

Come, fill up your cup! Come, fill up your can!
An optimum *diet—an* optimum *man!*
So spend all your salaries
On well-chosen calories,
And pile high your plates
With carbohydrates—
But all in proportion and plan—
The lettuce, the leek
Restore your physique,
But sausage has less
Of Vitamin S.
An optimum *diet—an* optimum *man!*

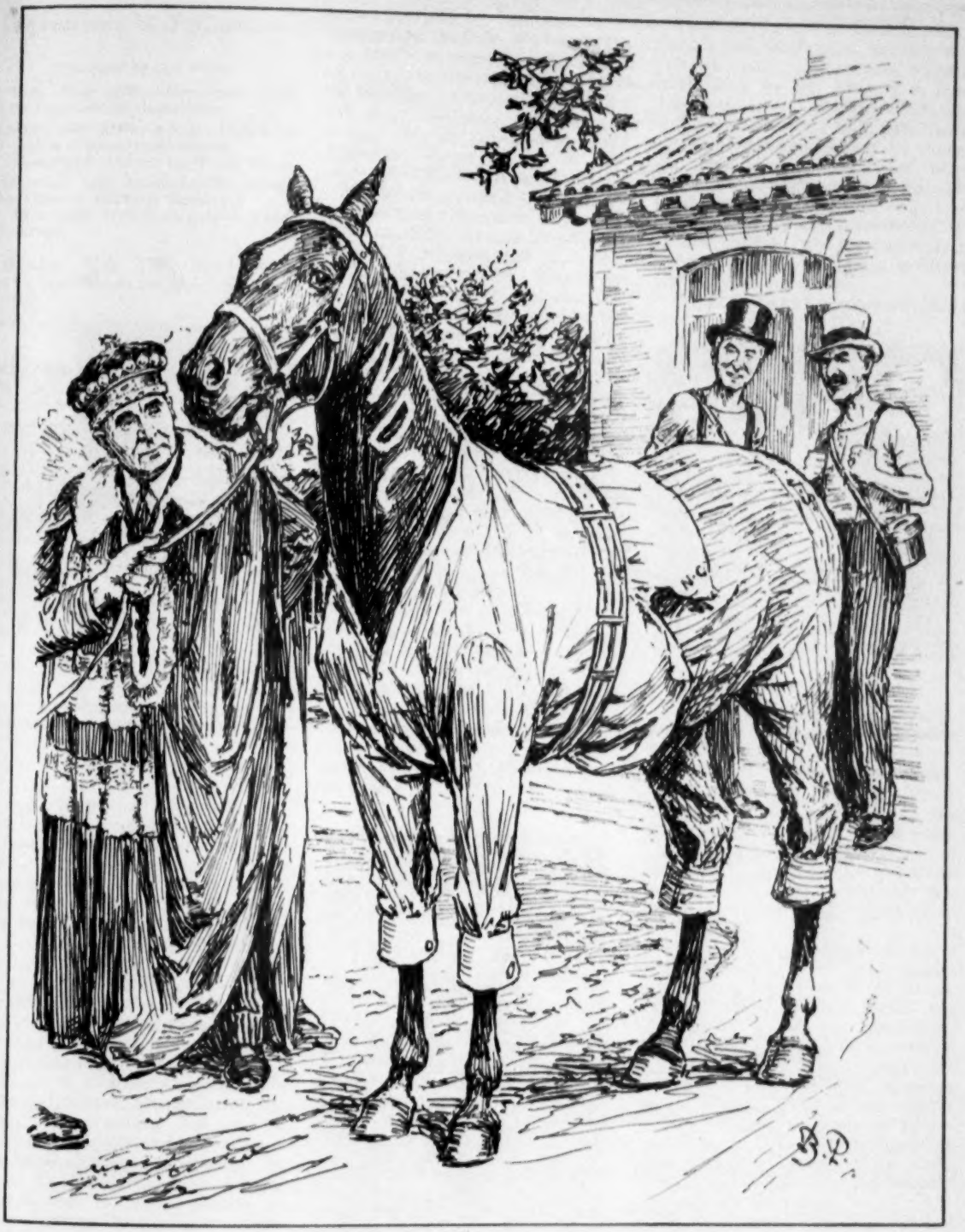
No more shall mortals speak of common food;
No more shall fleshly appetites intrude.
Eat what is right—but eat not that for long;
And take it anything you like is wrong.

Come, fill up your cup! Come, fill up your can!
An optimum *diet—an* optimum *man!*
They will not keep quiet
Concerning our diet,
So let us be good
And eat what we should,
Observing proportion and plan.
The next thing ahead
Is Vitamin Z.
We'll keep in condition
Through benenutrition—
An optimum *diet—an* optimum *man!*

Ho! landlord, now a little milk, I think!
I am not hungry but I need some zinc:
And milk, though it is not a vice of mine,
Is full of things like zinc and iodine.

Come, fill up your cup! Come, fill up your can!
An optimum *diet—an* optimum *man!*
I'm acid. I wish
For an alkali dish,
And if such can be got,
It don't matter what—
Begonias or beetroot or bran.
A battalion marches
On sugars and starches;
But intellect needs
Mangold-wurzels and weeds;
An optimum *diet—*
An optimum *diet—*
An optimum *diet—an* optimum *man.*

A. P. H.



HEAVILY BACKED

SIR ROBERT HORNE (*Chancellor of the Exchequer*, 1921, *and Viscount*, 1937). "WELL, I SEE HE'S GOT NEVILLE'S SHIRT AND SIMON'S ON HIM, BUT HE WON'T CARRY ANYTHING OF MINE."

Impressions of Parliament

Synopsis of the Week

***Monday, May 24th.*—Commons: Civil List discussed in Committee.**

***Tuesday, May 25th.*—Lords: Debate on Hygiene of Spanish Refugees.**
Commons: Debate on World Trade.

***Wednesday, May 26th.*—Lords: Debate on Thames Barrage Proposal.**
Commons: Debate on Private Trade in Arms.

Monday, May 24th.—Lord CRANBORNE was able to tell the House that the Government had approached the other Powers concerned with a view to a joint attempt to induce the two contending parties in Spain to cease hostilities while foreign volunteers could be withdrawn; and also that, since the Navy was affording no protection to Spanish ships returning to Bilbao after depositing refugee women and children in this country unless they were proved to be in ballast, there was no truth whatever in the suggestion that these ships were engaged in the carrying of munitions.



MR. RUNCIMAN'S SWAN-SONG

["Swans sing not out of sorrow or distress . . . they sing as foreknowing the good things their god hath in store for them." —*Socrates, as recorded in Plato's "Phædo."*]

Inset: ONE OF THE "GOOD THINGS"

Thanks to Captain CROOKSHANK's indefatigable work as a mediator, the difficult issues arising out of the mining dispute at Harworth have been brought much nearer a solution. In answer to Mr. BELLENGER he announced that the three parties involved had met in conference under his chairmanship and had agreed in principle to the amalgamation of the two unions. He had therefore nominated Mr. JOHN FORSTER as chairman of the conference to decide its terms.

The new Civil List, fixed at the existing total of £410,000 and making special provision for PRINCESS ELIZABETH and for the Duke of GLOUCESTER was briefly introduced by Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, who prefaced his remarks, as did the other leading speakers, with a tribute to the intense sincerity and courage of his predecessor, Lord SNOWDEN, whose passing, he said, everyone in the House would regret.

The debate produced a wide variety of views from different sections of the Opposition. Mr. ATTLEE accepted the idea of a constitutional monarchy, having, like the late JOHN WHEATLEY, no desire to exchange a capitalist monarchy for a capitalist republic; but he urged that the time had come for the KING to live a simpler life, more in contact with the mass of his people, and he asked for an inquiry into the real needs of a modern king.

Mr. MAXTON failed to see the sense in voting the Monarch thirty times as big a salary as had just been voted to the PRIME MINISTER, and Mr. GALLACHER suggested that eight pounds a week, the pay of an M.P., would be about right, since it would permit the KING to live in a nice council-house with a bit of garden.

The other side of the case was admirably stated by Mr. CHURCHILL, who had only to point to the public delight in the ceremonial of the Coronation to give the lie to the statements of Sir STAFFORD CRIPPS, and Sir HENRY PAGE CROFT's calculation, that the Crown only cost the individual fourpence a head, seemed to clinch the matter.



MR. BALDWIN ON HIS WAY TO ANOTHER PLACE MAKES A PARTING PRESENT TO PRIVATE MEMBERS.

Tuesday, May 25th.—Lord LLOYD's anxiety lest the Spanish children encamped near Southampton should bring back to this country a rare disease of the eye called trachoma, rife in Spain and extinct here, gave Lord DUFFERIN the opportunity to assure him that all precautions had been taken by the Committee on Spanish relief, and to reassure those who had raised in the Press the awful possibility of these children, who have scarcely a word of English, spreading political corruption in our midst.

Mr. DE LA BERE's pertinacious bombardment in the Commons of the MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE on farmyard topics has now become one of the standing entertainments at Question-time, and to-day, using only eggs and milk, he drew round upon round of applause.



HITTING OUT

MR. CHURCHILL OPENS THE SEASON BY SCORING HEAVILY IN HIS MOST AGGRESSIVE STYLE.

Inset: THE BALL (SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS)

If rumour is right, Mr. RUNCIMAN's reply to the Board of Trade debate was his last big speech in the House. It was certainly effective. Tariffs, and particularly the Ottawa agreements, had been blackguarded by the Liberal and Labour Opposition, they had found their usual doughty champion in Sir HENRY PAGE CROFT, and Sir ARTHUR SALTER had made the sweeping statement that since the depression the commercial policy of no single country had so restricted and deflected the trade of the world.

Mr. RUNCIMAN, while agreeing that any tariff system should be elastic, told the House that the Government could not be asked to abandon the principle of preference in view of its success. Every effort was being made to find a foundation on which a trade agreement between this country and



"You seek for El Dorado, Señor? Veree best picture-house in Santa Panza! The Laurel and the Hardee, Buono!"

the United States could be based, but it was useless to pretend that there were no obstacles in its way; and he wound up a satisfactory survey of the activity in the heavy industries with the hope that British producers would continue to hold their own by sheer quality.

Wednesday, May 26th.—Conversion of thirty miles of the Thames by a barrage at Woolwich into a slow-moving tideless lake of constant high-level was proposed in the Upper House this afternoon by Lord Dudley, and met by the joint disapproval of Lord Ritchie, Chairman of the Port of London Authority, and of the Government; Lord Dudley suggesting that, since the second of these was in the pocket of the first, its disfavour followed automatically.

The cost of the scheme, he explained, would be about £4,500,000. It would make two-way traffic permanently possible on the river, protect London from the huge quantities of sewage, only partly treated, which were at present carried up by the tide, and give complete security against flooding. He therefore asked for an inquiry.

Lord Jessel supported him, citing Boston and Amsterdam as places where similar works had been carried out with success; but Lord Ritchie disliked everything about the scheme. In the view of his experts, he said, the effect on sewage would be exactly the reverse, and the manœuvring of shipping, all of which would have to use locks, would be a physical impossibility; while the results of an air-raid at low-water would be appalling.



OUR BACK BENCH *WHO'S WHO*

Like the ocks,
Mr. Cocks
Was born to endure Labour.*
He thinks the pen far mightier than the sabour.

* *See* Ovid.

On the motion of the Opposition the Commons discussed the Government's attitude to the Report of the Royal Commission on Arms. The bitterest experience in his life, said Mr. Noel Baker, was the two years he had spent at Geneva working with the President of the Disarmament Conference, when he had seen the National Government block most of the constructive proposals which had been made. The field had been left free for the armament firms, and the Opposition were convinced that profiteering was going on unchecked.

After Mr. F. K. Griffith had associated the Liberal Party with the motion, Sir Thomas Inskip replied that the Government had not been so cavalier with the Commission's recommendations as had been suggested, and pointed out the curious paradox that when, in the case of Spain, the Government had put into operation a practical embargo on the export of arms, the Labour Party had pressed them to remove it.

Parliament, 2037

THE Parliamentary deadlock of 2037 is fully dealt with in a pamphlet by Sir B ch Benje issued late in that year. In the Preface Sir Bach puts the blame on Mr. STANLEY BALDWIN, who retired just a hundred years ago.

"It is impossible to overestimate the damage done by BALDWIN to the British Constitution," he writes, "which could only be supported so long as the Party System in Parliament prevailed undimmed. It is necessary to the very existence of the Party System that the Government should presume that the Opposition are (*a*) insane, (*b*) unprincipled, (*c*) unpatriotic, and that the Opposition should assume that the Government are (*a*) insane, (*b*) incompetent, (*c*) in the clutches of vested interests. All through his Parliamentary career this BALDWIN caused great despondency and alarm by refusing to believe that the men on the opposite benches were less honourable than his party. So far as lay in his power he endeavoured to turn Parliament from a dog-fight arena to a legislative assembly.

"Those sturdy Englishmen who believed in Party strife and class-war were relieved when BALDWIN retired in 1937, but they smiled too soon, for the insidious poison which he had injected into the Parliamentary system continued to do its work. In 1940, in face of the hundred-and-seventeenth Gravest European Crisis since 1914, 614 out of the 615 Members of the House supported the Government in favour of sending a Note to a Power that had sunk a British merchant ship for no better reason than that they (the Power) did not like the colour of the captain's moustache, and in the years that followed Britain showed something like a United Front in foreign affairs.

"This was bad enough, but when in 1967 a similar spirit began to show itself in Home Affairs, those who had the Best Interests of the Nation at Heart shook their heads gloomily and bought dollars in large quantities. The formation of a Joint Committee drawn from all quarters of the House to tackle the Distressed Areas, the Relief of Impoverished Peers and the Protection of Gossip Journalists was felt to aim a death-blow at Cabinet Responsibility and the Party System.

"The politeness of the Government towards the Opposition and the politeness of the Opposition towards the Government increased abominably in the years that followed, and eventually came the Crisis of 2037, when the Prime Minister made the following remarkable speech: 'My colleagues and I, although we have a huge majority, have decided to resign. At a Cabinet meeting last evening we came unanimously to the conclusion that we were not good enough to run the country. In recent debates it has become increasingly clear to us that the Opposition contains all the best brains (Opposition cries of 'No!') and that on almost every question they are far more capable of putting things right than we are.' (Government cries of 'Hear, hear!').

"He sat down and the Leader of the Opposition diffidently rose: 'I think I express the feelings of my Party,' he said with evident emotion, 'when I say that our present Government is the best we have ever had. We have been thrilled to the core by the wisdom and fairness of the Prime Minister. The Foreign Secretary has handled situations of the utmost difficulty with the firmness of a PALMERSTON and the cunning of a MACHIAVELLI. My colleagues and I feel that if we were to take office now it would be (to quote the Bard of Avon) like the dung-cart that inevitably follows the Lord Mayor's Show.'

"So for many months His Majesty was without a Government, everybody feeling that everybody else was so much better qualified to hold office."



"YES, THAT'S MY HUSBAND. UNFORTUNATELY HE STARTED TO STAIN THE STAIRS FROM THE WRONG END."

At the Play

"Paganini" (Lyceum)

The popular view of great musicians sees them perhaps as romantic, perhaps as tragic, figures, but *Paganini* (Mr. Richard Tauber), for all his technical excellence, takes life lightly, moving from love-affair to love-affair and having continually to be reminded by his impresario, *Bartucci* (Mr. Esmé Percy), of the importance of his concerts and his career. Business is business, cries *Bartucci*, or rather, he adds, quickly remembering his rôle, art is a sacred trust. But *Paganini* is much more interested in life and the favours of fine ladies, and among the ladies none is finer than *Anna Elisa Bonaparte* (Miss Evelyn Laye), who may declare in her opening song that she is a ruler because her brother is Napoleon, but who soon makes it clear that she rules in fact in her own right. Alike in beauty and decision and zest she is a star and a portent in the little state of Lucca.

The operetta has a simple enough story of a passing flirtation between the musician and the great lady. It is all rather like one of the popular romantic films, and it sits of course very lightly to the historic past, as it should. Mr. Tauber presents a most attractive musician, naïvely delighted with any and every kind of applause or success, involving himself in the most foolish and risky scrapes from a short-sighted desire to give pleasure at the moment. He has been fitted out with lyrics which strike a lighter note than do those German songs most intimately associated with this celebrated voice.

The producer has most skilfully blended a note of ceremonial stiffness in the Court of Lucca, a stiffness personified in the rather unpleasant *Prince Felice* (Mr. George Hayes), with a note of irresponsibility which is perfectly caught not only by Mr. Tauber and Miss Laye but by Mr. Charles Heslop as *Pimpinelli*, the *Pooh-bah* of this little Court, on whose shoulders rests most of the responsibility for making the evening full of laughter as well as of song.



THE SECRET OF FASCINATION

Pimpinelli . . . . . Mr. Charles Heslop
Paganini . . . . . Mr. Richard Tauber



A PRINCESS IS NOT AMUSED

Princess Anna Elisa . . . Miss Evelyn Laye
Bella Girati . . . . . Miss Joan Panter

In a setting of three scenes, a village, a palace, and a smugglers' cave, the piece cascades into gentle pools. It is not concerned with the turning-point in anybody's life, but then its people are at their best under serene skies, and for their ardent temperaments the sudden admirations, the resulting jealousies, the insufficiently-resisted temptations to resist the exercise of despotic powers to vent private spleens must be thought of as no more than everyday life. For a moment *Elisa* has to think that matters have grown serious, because the Emperor at Fontainebleau has heard rumours of goings-on in this little Italian principality to which he is resolved an end shall be put; but she does not let herself be bullied, nor can she bring herself to bully *Paganini*.

The musical numbers, which the piece serves to thread and to produce, triumphantly achieve their central purpose of generalising this particular story, translating the attraction of *Paganini* and *Anna Elisa* into all young and unexpected love. Franz Lehar, not for the first time, has known exactly how to provide the vehicle in which the voice of Tauber voyages off, to rest in the ears and the hearts of the audience. That nothing shall be missing from the performance, the lyrics thus composed and thus sung have also a literary merit. Mr. Herbert and Mr. Arkell have remembered the occasion for which they are writing and have kept firm hands on their exuberant literary fancies; but there is enough in the neat turns of praise and in the just appreciation of the weight and worth of words to make the mind also very well satisfied.

The Second Act is a little too long, the Third a little too short, but altogether *Paganini* is a thoroughly satisfying evening, and it gains from seeming to have come into 1937 from some earlier theatrical day.

D. W.

"A Ship Comes Home"
(St. Martin's)

This ship, built by Miss Daisy Fisher, is a vessel sound enough to stand up against the theatrical seas for some time, if the trade winds of summer blow as they should. It very nearly comes home; or perhaps it is fairer to say that, after a voyage in which it takes the buffeting of deeper waters as easily as it rides the sparkling waves of comedy—its ballast being properly distributed—the last act of tying up alongside the dock is not carried out with quite the neatness which the previous handling of the ship had led one to expect. This is a flaw in construction, and no reflection on a crew whose skill is evident from first to last.

Why should the inefficiently-conducted boarding-house make a stage background of almost unfailing effectiveness? I have brooded over this phenomenon but I can offer no adequate explanation except possibly that to those who have stayed in boarding-houses of one kind or another—who must be the greater part of the public—almost any freak of character appears natural in such an atmosphere.

Here, for instance, we find and are not amazed by *Ivy Combe*, nominally the head of as well-assorted an establishment as you could wish. She is played by Miss Laura Cowie, and memories of *Strange Orchestra* do not mislead. Having known better days, she is taking rapidly to the bottle and growing hourly blowzier; and she is not much disturbed by the knowledge that one of her daughters, *Mirabel*, youthful pattern of herself, is living with the least respectable of the inmates, while *Mary*, a girl of finer stuff, is growing to hate desperately the squalor of the home.

Mary's problem is the core of the play. She is in love with *Christopher*, the *Combes'* young doctor, but when she discovers that he is secretly engaged she considers in her unhappiness the offer of a trip to Italy made to her by *Mirabel's* lover, of whose relation to her sister she is unaware. She is equally unsuspicious of the fact that *Christopher's* betrothed is her beloved aunt, *Rosamund*, to whom she confides her troubles. The next move is with *Rosamund*; being a woman of character and having guessed that *Christopher* is violently attracted by *Mary*, she moves with the utmost generosity.

So far as this Miss Fisher seems to me to preserve unimpaired a sound sense of values, and her Second Act, which might so easily have rung false, is an admirably perceptive piece of writing. It is towards the end of her Third Act that she loses this sense and introduces into the plot a magazine *cliché* which distorts its perceptive, not for very long but for long enough to disturb the balance of the play. That anyone so intelligent as *Mary* should have failed to find out that *Rosamund*, not *Ivy*, was her mother, I cannot believe, nor can I see any adequate reason for dragging in this melodramatic *dénouement*, which brings with it the only sentimentality discernible in the play. Eric.



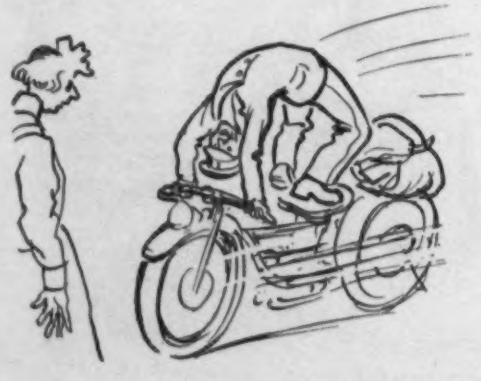
Visitor. "See—even the little pig knows me!"
Farmer's Wife. "'Tain't you 'e knows, Lady—'tis 'is little bowl."

At the Royal Tournament

Our Private Pullthrough was once overheard to remark to a gipsy who had passed some adverse comment, "In a general way, chum, we soldiers keeps ourselves *to* ourselves; *but* we ain't above surprising any swipe who don't know what a pop on the beezer feels like—see!" Well, in a general way the Fighting Forces keep themselves to themselves, *but* they aren't above surprising the general tax-paying public every now and then with a glimpse of what's really being done with their money. So here once again is the Royal Tournament, a fine little floor-show which the Services annually put on for their backers—that is, you and me.

That in a year of unexampled pageantry the Royal Tournament still holds its own is something of an achievement. But then the *pièce de résistance* is an Historical Display by the Honourable Artillery Company, celebrating this year its four-hundredth birthday. (It was originally formed as a "Fraternity of Artillery, Longbows, Crossbows and Handguns," but they've quite grown out of that now.) They give a grand representation of a field-day of 1829. Incidentally they seem to take field-days much more seriously than I took them in 1913. As I remember it, my ambition was amply satisfied if I could score a telling hit an on umpire's horse, using as ammunition a small chocolate-cream just ahead of a round of blank. They march in with Guns and Grenadiers and Light Infantry, and Yagers (Light Yagers too, I think, and probably headed by a Pilsner-Major), and they skirmish and retire, and charge and fire, and an enjoyable time is had by all. The only jarring note, I thought, was where, just after the troops had been finally fallen out, they were suddenly ordered to "Form Rallying Square." Apparently it was a test of their preparedness to meet eventualities when not in formation, but it must have been rather hard on those who by good strategical work had got first place in the canteen queue.

Another interesting item is the Motor-Cycle Display, in which the riders, while driving at a fearsome speed, stand on their saddles, lie on their carriers, drive backwards—in fact do everything but take down and decarbonise the engine. It is carried out by the London Divisional Signals, Territorial Army. Note this last, please, for it means that these amazing stunts are being performed not by regular soldiers but by men from banks, insurance offices, factories and so on—even by postmen. A solemn thought this. Our village postman has a motor-bike, but I don't think he'd better see this item: it might go to his head.



If the village postman joins the Signals T.F.

Of more sedate turns there is what is called an "Agility Display" by the Army Physical Training Staff—and, boy, are they agile?—while the R.A.F. also give a physical training turn with at one point some very effective club-swinging in the dark, the clubs being coloured electric torches. The Toy-Soldier display by the boys of the Duke of York's School was new to me, but altogether delightful and very clever. I could see lots and lots more of it. *En passant*, do they go back in the box at night?



The Junior "P.B.I."

Of the hardy perennials, so well established in popular favour, there are certain items which always stick in my mind, such as—

(1) The sailors' famous gun-dismantling and juggling act; or, "When does a 2½-cwt. limber only seem to weigh three pounds?"

(2) The "Trick Band" Turn (this year the full band of the Royal Marines will Positively Appear), when said band marches straight at the end of the arena, blowing its little heart out; then, just when you think that in a moment the whole place will be a shambles of punctured tubas, broken reed-instruments and meaningless cymbals, the band gives itself a shake, turns inside-out and reappears as the same band going the other way, still blowing its little heart out. I love this one.

(3) The breathless second when the gymnastic young lads from the Naval Training Establishments, who have been manœuvring about the ceiling like flies, suddenly slide head-first, without hands and very rapidly, down the ropes to the ground. I never know whether anyone forgets to stop in time, since I always cover my eyes and pray; but they always seem to be all present and right way up when I dare look again.

(4) The bit where in the Musical Drive—by "K" Battery, R.H.A.—they all just miss each other at a gallop. (The temperamental near-leader at No. 3 gun, on this particular occasion, did her best to see they didn't—without any luck.)

This last reminds me that there is another R.H.A. item this year, "C" Battery giving a vaulting display with ordinary gun-team horses. These seem almost as good as the circus horses I have seen at other times in the same arena,

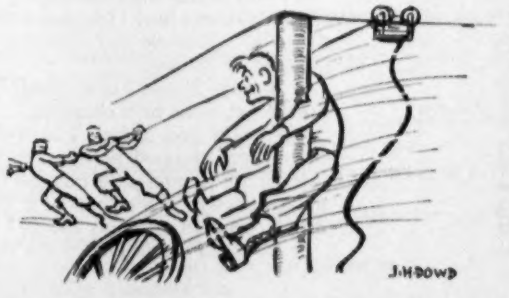
but I bet the latter couldn't take an R.H.A. gun into action. There is also a Musical Ride, beautifully done by the 16/5th Lancers; but this brings me to the only criticism I have to make of this year's Show. Is there perhaps a little too much Horse about it? May it not be perhaps cavalry to the general—worshipper though the general public always is of the R.H.A.? Perhaps I am wrong, but I *would* have



HORSES, FRESH . . . 1.

liked to see one item by an ordinary line regiment of the P.B.I. There are the Marines, of course, doing their famous close-order drill, performed by the King's Squad (from their depôt at Deal), but while I can tell the Marines a good many things and get away with it, I wouldn't care to refer to them as a line regiment.

Never mind! Speaking as one of the backers of the show—and I'm taking an extra threepence-in-the-pound's worth of interest this year—I'm very pleased with the little effort, even though, unfortunately, none of the profits find their way into my pocket. But as they go to Service charities I don't propose to lodge a protest. Besides, the authorities



FROM PILLAR TO POST—BUT THE NAVY CAN TAKE IT.

might insist on my taking a part if I did—say that one of sliding down a rope face-first and stopping myself just before I hit the ground. I bet they *know* how forgetful I am! A. A.

Forestry

IT wasn't a very large tree. It would have been hard put to it to accommodate a rookery. It wasn't even up to the job of supporting the stern of the hammock. It was, in fact, just a rather elderly elderberry, no good to anybody. So I concluded it might as well come down.

Chopping down trees is one of the rarest thrills life has to offer the garden-lover. I might have been selfish and kept it all to myself, but I wasn't. I was generous and asked Bill round for a Sunday's tree-felling. Besides, Bill had an axe.

We got down to it gently. We didn't want to finish it all off at once. We didn't know when we should have another tree to cut down. We took it turn and turn about. First Bill would deal it a dozen delicate taps, and then it would be my innings. We meant to make that tree last.

"She isn't the tree she was," said Bill, proudly surveying the gash. "Here, it's your turn. Don't sock her too hard, mind."

"There's plenty of life in her, nursed carefully," I said.

It really was extraordinarily fascinating work. You made a downward slash, and then a horizontal one, and that took a beautiful little chip clean out. The wound grew wider and wider.

"As a tree she's going to look pretty silly to-morrow," I said.

"I wonder why axe-heads always keep flying off?" speculated Bill, casting around for the mallet.

"An act of Providence. If we hadn't had to keep sticking the head on again the tree would have been down half-an-hour ago."

"I'm afraid she's on her last legs now. Do—do you think perhaps we might leave the gash we've made and start a new one higher up?"

But I didn't think that would be playing the game.

"Keep her going a little longer," I said, "and then we'll come out and administer the *coup de grâce* after the tea-interval, with due ceremony."

"Here, it's my turn," Bill reminded me.

"Don't be forgetful and let her have all you've got," I said. I wanted the honour of toppling her to the ground and filling the air with a mighty rending crash. After all, it was *my* tree.

"All right, I'll be careful. Look out!" said Bill anxiously. "Don't lean on her!"

When we knocked off for tea she looked good for another hour at least. My wife said she was sure we wanted tea after all our hard work. Bill and I both showed her our blisters.

It was just as I was reaching out for my second cup that the wind sprang up. Bill and I sprang up too, actuated by the same apprehension.

"Quick!" yelled Bill. "We shall be too late!"

I grabbed the axe and we raced out to finish off the job. But it had been finished off for us. There she lay, supine on the ground, beyond our aid. We hadn't even heard the mighty rending crash. We stood gazing at her sorrowfully.

"It's your fault," said Bill sadly. "You oughtn't to have hung your coat on her."

Then we went indoors again and got on with our tea.

Public Benefactor No. 1

"For in 1871 the young were gaining fast upon the old. Now the old are already gaining upon the young. One may ask, who is going to pay them their old-age pensions?—I am, Sir, &c., ——."

From Letter to "Daily Telegraph."

The Annual Adventure

THE tennis season is upon us. I know this because last Sunday as I sat in my garden there reached me vocal evidence of struggles and strivings, of hopes and disappointments which left me in no doubt that my neighbour and his wife were engaged in the great adventure of marking out the court for the first time in the year.

She. You know I asked the Marlows for half-past three. We shall have to be quick.

He (*lightheartedly*). There's stacks of time. It only takes half-an-hour to mark out a court.

She. I think I'll go and put on an old skirt.

He. Right-o. I'll get the string round the court.

She. Did you get the string?

He. No. Well, I can't help it; I forgot. It doesn't matter; we've got those corner things. I can make a bee-line from one to the other.

There followed an interval during which he was apparently moving about the court whistling. I conjectured that he was searching for the corner things and that she was trying to decide which skirt would look best for mixing whitening. The whistling gradually ceased and was superseded by exclamations of annoyance.

She (*re-entering brightly*). Here I am. I'd quite forgotten this skirt. Doesn't it look rather nice?

He (*without enthusiasm*). Oh, ripping. I say, I can't find those beastly corner things. They've all got buried.

She (*absently*). Have they? It's almost too good for this sort of thing. I think I'll go and put on your old mackintosh.

He. Do you suppose Thomas took them up when he mowed the lawn? Never mind; I'll measure a base-line and stick in pegs. Where's the measure?

She. We haven't got one. Oh, yes, I've got a yard tape-measure.

He (*testily*). You don't suppose I'm going to crawl round the court with a yard-measure, do you?

She (*testier*). Well, you must do something. They'll be here directly.

He. All right; I'll get the pegs and pace it out. You get on with mixing the whitening.

Here I think I must have dozed, for I was next conscious of a peg being hammered in, and then—

He. That's the base-line—thirty-six. Now for the side-line. I know that's seventy-eight.

[*A good deal of counting followed.*

He. Hang it all, I've only paced thirty yards and I'm bang in the hedge.

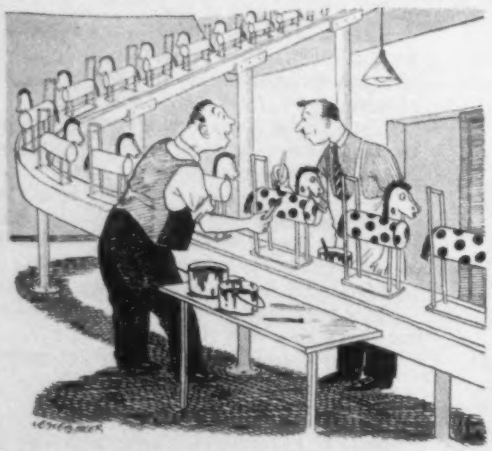
She. But is a court seventy-eight yards long?

He. No, I suppose it's feet. (*Pause for division sum.*) Twenty-six yards. Now, you pace one side and I'll pace the other, starting from those two base-pegs.

Both (*triumphantly after a numerical duet*). . . . twenty-five, twenty-six.

She. That's all wrong. You're much further down the lawn than I am.

He. Well, you can't have paced yards. Here, I'll pace that side. (*Silence.*) Then—twenty-six (*hammer-hammer-hammer*). There you are.



"LET'S TAKE A CHANCE AND MAKE THE NEXT ONE A ZEBRA."

She. Ye-es, but that makes this base-line much narrower than the other.

He. I know; we ought to have made a right-angle at the top corner. I know how to do that. With this as centre and this as radius draw an arc, then with this as centre and that as radius draw another, then where the arcs cut——

She. But they don't cut.

He. Oh, lor! I expect I ought to have had a longer radius.

She. It's frightfully clever, but will it work?

He. Of course it must. It's EUCLID. There—now you draw the side-line through the point of contact and off you go.

She. Yes, straight into the herbaceous border.

He (*many things in an undertone*).

She (*hopefully*). Let's put the whitening into the machine and mark one side-line and work from that.

He. That's an idea. Go to the other end and see I'm going straight.

Then followed a shrill soprano solo with a descant on the marker—"Left—no—right—more right—no, no, my right—your left."

He (*conceitedly*). There you are. How's that?

She. Out, palpably out.

He. Oh, it'll have to do; they're only last year's balls.

Suddenly a loud shriek rent the calm of the Sunday afternoon.

She. You are too clumsy! All over my shoes! Every drop gone and there's no more!

He. I'm awfully sorry—and, by Jove, here they come! I must dash up and change.

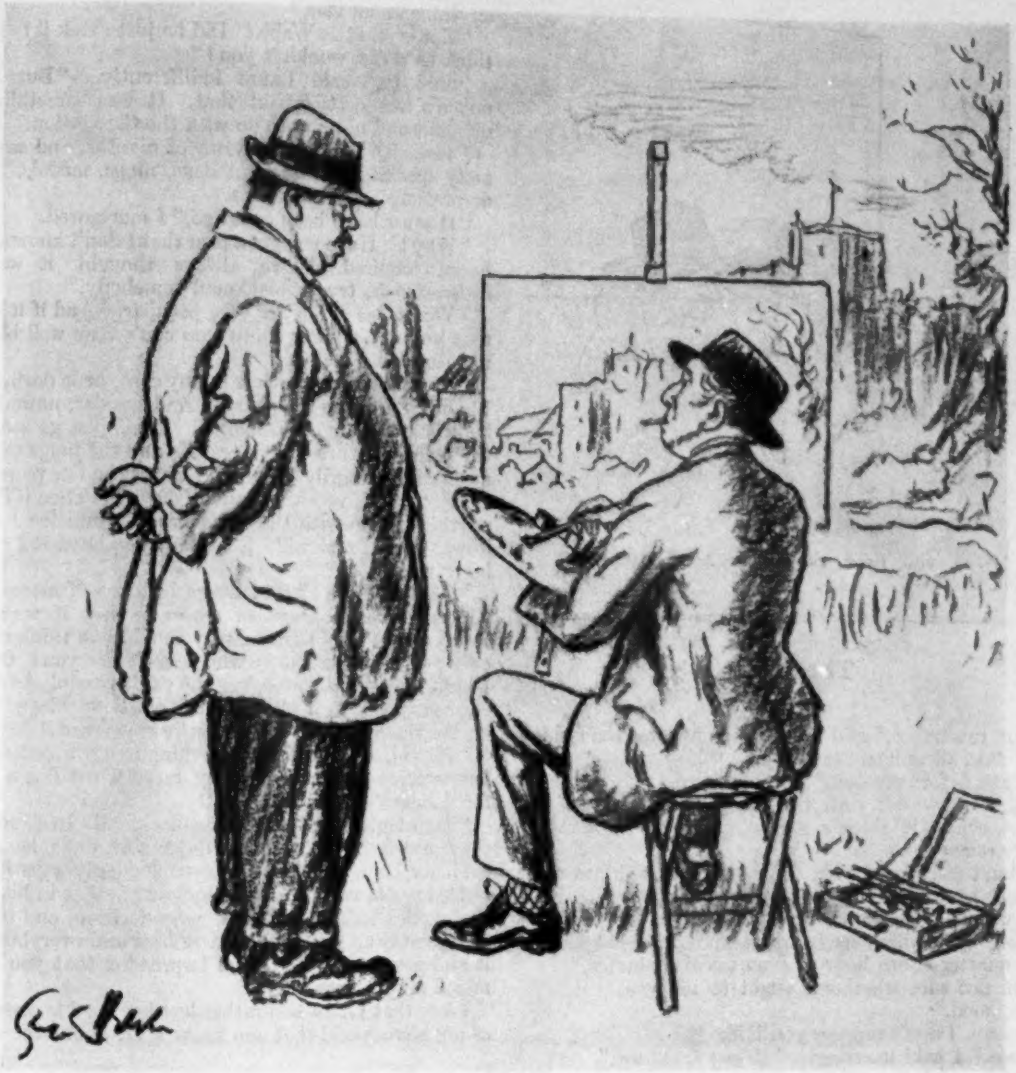
She. Change? Whatever for? We can't play tennis with one wobbly line! (*Fiercely*) Come back! Oh, you coward! (*Sweetly*) How-de-do? Tom's just gone up to change.

A Strange Man's Voice. Shall I put up the net while he's changing?

She. Do you know, I'm awfully sorry, Tom stepped in the whitening just as we'd measured out the court so beautifully. We wondered if you'd care to come in and play bridge?

A Strange Female Voice. We'd love to.

As I write this, sitting on my balcony on the following evening, I can see my neighbour's court in all its white and geometrical perfection. The gardener is just putting away the marking machine.



"I SUPPOSE THAT'LL BE DURABLE WHEN IT'S DRY, SIR?"

Kitty's Reflections

"I BEGIN at the great High School for Girls next week,
And don't you forget it.
I shall ride my bicycle, new and shining-sleek,
No rain has wet it,
Nor road-pools either. But I love as I ride by
In the jolly blue weather
To watch the reflected Scholarship girl that's I
Poised like a feather.
'A thing all freckles and teeth and sunburnt knees,'
Says the winking water
With a grave mock-frown like father's, trying to tease
His dunce of a daughter.
'Attractive, yes, in the mouth (when shut),' says Fred;
That's the wit of a brother.
'One bright idea lost in a jungle of head'—
That's my wag of a mother.
But I shall show them, girls and mistresses too,
The stuff I am spun of
When I ride in greatness through crowds up our avenue
Who now am made fun of.
I am not quite beautiful nor yet quite plain,
And would scorn to be pretty,
But I have a merry heart and I have a brain
And the will," sings Kitty.



"Will you drop us off at Aunt Barbara's Tea Kitchen?"

The Mew

"You remember," said Laura, "when it was the fashion to say that all women are always cats?"

"It was before my day," I told her.

"Oh, no, it wasn't. After, if anything."

"But evidently there's still something in it," I rather bitterly remarked.

"I don't call *that* cattish. You should have heard what I've just heard. That's really what put it into my head about women being cats. I was furious."

"Well," I inquired as Laura stopped for what seemed like a quarter-of-an- hour or even twenty minutes.

"I'm not sure whether I ought to tell you."

"Oh, good."

"I mean, I don't suppose you'll like it."

"Then," I said unerringly, "it *was* about me."

"Yes," said Laura. "And no."

"What can you possibly mean? And if it's anything about what happened at the last committee-meeting you ought to have stopped it at once. Whatever passes in committee is absolutely confidential. Everybody knows that."

"Still," said Laura, "if you mean the Coronation Committee, practically everybody in the village was on it, so it couldn't be *frightfully* confidential, could it? And I suppose if two people who were both on the committee met afterwards and talked about it you couldn't exactly say there was any breach of confidence."

I begged Laura not to put hypothetical cases of conscience to me but to come out into the open at once.

"I'm perfectly prepared to be criticised," I said—("Don't shout, darling," said Laura)—"but if it was about the mugs, then I *still* think it was a mistake not to have them washed directly they were unpacked."

"Oh, it was," cried Laura earnestly. "They went straight from the packing-case to the tea-tables, and I absolutely *saw* little Webb's tea *swimming* in bits of straw."

"I think you mean the other way on, don't you?"

"It was both, practically. But anyway, nobody said anything about *that*."

"Not even little Webb? Did he just drink it? I should think he'd die, wouldn't you?"

"Sure to," said Laura indifferently. "But I mean nobody was catty about that. It was something quite different and nothing to do with the Coronation."

I looked back, down a vista of months, and saw, figuratively speaking, nothing but flags, mugs, medals, bonfires, decorations and processions.

"It must have been ages ago," I murmured.

"Why? Have you got a past that I don't know about?" Laura inquired. "I've always thought it would be rather fun to try to blackmail somebody."

"Your ideas of fun are very peculiar. And if it's a past that you don't know about you can't very well blackmail me, can you?"

"It wouldn't be worth it in any case, poor darling, when I know you haven't a penny. And besides, nowadays nobody minds being blackmailed. They just go straight to the police and are called Mrs. X, and the judge says it's a mean and cowardly crime and that'll be ten years."

"How much you know about the law. Then if it wasn't anything to do with the Coronation Committee I suppose it was Miss Prankmill. She never has liked me. I don't know why."

"Oh, don't you?" said Laura in tones of astonishment. "I can think of heaps of reasons. But it wasn't Miss Prankmill at all. Besides, why should you think she's the only person in the village who doesn't like you? Of course I know most of them *do*, but she can't possibly be the *only* one who doesn't. I always think old Lady Flagge is a bit on the doubtful side where you're concerned."

"If old Lady Flagge has anything to say about me she'd better come and say it to my face. Then I can sue her for slander."

"That isn't nearly as good as blackmail. In slander cases they nearly always spend days and days hearing the evidence, and then some lawyer suddenly says it's been settled out of court, and the judge says that in his opinion the parties have come to a wise decision, and old Lady Flagge puts an apology in *The Times* and everybody reads it and gets a sort of general impression that you've been mixed up in a scandal."

I saw that Laura had rather lost her head in consequence of my having said that she knew a lot about the law.



"One day, dearie, *your* Prince Charming will happen along."



THE IRRELIGIOUS EIGHTIES



OBVIOUS

Visitor (at our Sunday School). "WHAT IS THE OUTWARD AND VISIBLE FORM IN BAPTISM?"
Pupil (tentatively, after a long pause at this poser). "PLEASE, TEACHER, THE BABY!"

Charles Keene, Punch, June 7th, 1884.

"I should be very glad," I said, "if you wouldn't mind telling me who said what about me that made you think about their being cats."

"All right, I will," Laura said. "It was that visiting cousin at the Rectory—that Angela Thingamy."

"I disliked that woman at sight and I don't care who knows it," I replied with—I still think—commendable straightforwardness.

"Yes, well, she herself is one of the people who knows it, because some of the things you said came round to her. And to-day at the Rectory Mrs. Battlegate—you know how stupid she is—suddenly asked this Angela creature, didn't she think you were perfectly charming."

"I see nothing stupid in that."

"Don't you? Think of the opportunity it gave Angela!"

"If she likes to show herself a spiteful cat——" I said coldly. "Better tell me what she said."

"Well, Mrs. Battlegate said, 'Don't you think she's charming?' and we all waited for Angela to say something devastating about your being well-preserved, or having a squint, or wearing the wrong hats or something; and she didn't. She just looked at Mrs. Battlegate and said *nothing at all.* And of course that *completely* answered the question—and yet nobody could say she was being a cat."

"I could," I answered.

Not without passion, either. E. M. D.

"I think the clergy are driving people away from church just because they have not progressed with the times. I have been churchwarden at St. Agatha's for many years, and I think this is a scandal."—*Letter to the "Hackney Gazette."*

The remedy should be simple.

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Teuila Speaking

It were a thousand pities if *This Life I've Loved* (Joseph, 15/-) were to be passed over by a public satiated with reminiscences of R. L. S. For Stevenson's stepdaughter, Belle Osbourne—once Mrs. Strong and on her present title-page Isobel Field—is a personality in her own right and has a vivacious and gallant fashion of relating an adventurous story. Long before "Lewis" met Fanny Osbourne at Grez, Fanny's only daughter had played a *Luck-of-Roaring-Camp* part in California; shared her mother's straits when her beloved Kentucky "poppa" made his first (but not his last) disappearance on a prospecting expedition; taken with immense verve to the home-made delights of her grandmother's Indianapolis farm, and commenced art student in a Paris studio without a word of communicable French. To Stevenson she became a sympathetic amanuensis, soundly resenting Sidney Colvin's dictatorial strictures and taking down fifteen pages of *St. Ives* from a deaf-and-dumb code imparted to a temporarily speechless author. Her Samoa is rendered with the gusto of a pioneer, for she inherited not only her mother's magnificent practicality but an appreciative tenderness which won her the name of Teuila—"She who makes the ugiy beautiful."



"There 's some more Government propaganda to get us fit."

Self-Complacencies of a Minor Prophet

Mr. C. E. M. Joad goes to a good deal of cheerful trouble to prove what a really unpleasant person he is. When the fit is on him, he declares, he sneaks along hedge-bottoms, dresses like a tramp, despises excess of soap and water and makes adequately savage remarks about most things and people. Though infinitely satisfied with his competence to instruct the world, he has a way of plunging to conclusions, as for instance when he declares an unlimited detestation of machinery while demanding, in the name of Socialism, a universal sharing of the "good life" conceivable only on a basis of mass production. His readers must love him for his valiant tiltings against war and cruelty and his understanding delight in beauty, whether in Chinese art or in the English countryside, neither can they deny him the gift of exposition which he claims, yet with a reaction which he certainly finds amusing none of them will wholly approve either his philosophy or his manners. In his latest work—*The Testament of Joad* (Faber and Faber, 8/6)—his solemn and his impish selves admittedly get tangled. He is feeling for the underlying divineness of the world no less when he is scolding English cooks or decrying established religion than when he is seeking to recapture the glamour of a Sussex hillside.

Citizeness of the World

Undoubtedly there are fewer of them than there were—the happy marriages that used to ally Victorian England to a less pugnacious and nationality-ridden Continent. Yet the Marchesa Stella Vitelleschi—Miss Stella Rho, the actress—is a proof, if proof were needed, of the vivacity, courage and initiative that comes of grafting a Scots scion into a noble Roman stock. Why her adventurous memoirs are entitled *Out of My Coffin* (Hurst and Blackett, 12/6) you shall be left to discover, with a mere endorsement of "Ian Hay's" guarantee that the title is justified. He is right too in suggesting that their richest lode is their writer's Roman childhood. As Queen Margherita's god-daughter, Stella was an important young person; but her encounters with the splendid Society — papal, royal and aristocratic—of her youth are more often than not the shattering interventions of an *enfant terrible*. A wistful retrospect across a life of bravely-faced reverses has given tenderness and charm to those picturesque and sheltered days; and though she ends with a tribute to athletics and *auto-strade*, the wittiest, most winning, most tolerant and most cultivated of her two Romes is the Rome of Leo XIII. and Umberto.

Business as Usual

Whether Miss Georgette Heyer is writing historical romances or thrillers, *e.g.*, *They Found Him Dead* (Hodder and Stoughton, 7/6), her characters are always alive. Perhaps this statement requires qualification, for in her latest story she promptly disposes of two people, and it is abundantly evident that a third crime was contemplated. All of which aroused the keenest interest in a boy of fourteen, who not without reason was known to the police as *Terrible Timothy*. This child, finding himself right in the midst of murders and mysteries, played the sleuth to his heart's content; but Miss Heyer is not entirely successful with a type that is becoming rather too common in detective fiction. Otherwise the tale runs neatly and smoothly, and it is not beyond the wit of man to suspect, even if he does not absolutely spot, the villain of the piece.

News With Views

"The robber ran away without attempting to pick up any of the scattered jewels. He was caught by the messenger and his assistant, who left him in the custody of a crowd of spectators while police were summoned, but when the boobies arrived it was found he had escaped."—*Report in Vancouver Paper.*

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Charivaria

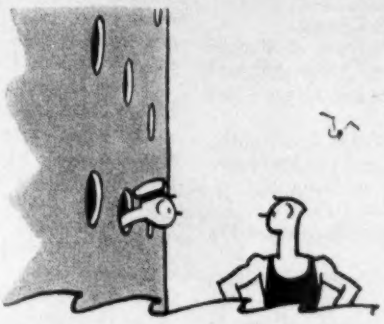
A SEVEN-FOOT Egyptian is to attempt the Channel-swim this summer. He will naturally paddle out as far as possible.

★ ★ ★

The Cabinet reshuffle has not so far led to the suggestion that a familiar feature of our streets should in future be known as Dr. Burgin Beacons.

★ ★ ★

A well-known chef has left a London hotel in order to take up duties at a sun-bathing camp in Devonshire. Part of his job, we take it, will be to turn the bathers when they are brown enough.



★ ★ ★

Reading has a club for Bright Young Things. While agreeing in principle, we suggest that a slipper would be less drastic.

★ ★ ★

"For to-day, the Meteorological Office forecasts fair and rather warm weather, gymnastics, sword-dancing and indoor games."
Newcastle Paper.

Further outlook: Very hot and bothered.

★ ★ ★



The inventor of a new cloth-cutting machine claims that its thoroughness is unsurpassable. He can't have seen our Uncle George playing billiards.

★ ★ ★

A correspondent to *The Evening News* states that laughing jackasses broadcast very confidently. We understand, however, that the B.B.C. consider their present variety audiences perfectly satisfactory.

★ ★ ★

"Sandwich men wanted. Wages 25/- a week."—*Advt.*

This includes board but not lodging.

★ ★ ★

Strawberries were recently sold in London at sixpence each. Mayfair housewives are no doubt busy making out-of-season jam.



An American woman has been given a divorce because her husband never returned home till about 3 A.M. This is the first case on record of the early worm getting the bird.

★ ★ ★

Don't Miss This.

"'THREE SMART GIRLS'
(Approved for Universal Exhibition)
SUPERB SHORTS."
Cinema Advt. in "The Wanganui Herald."

★ ★ ★

"Punctuation even can bring a picture to the mind," says an essayist. Don't look now, but isn't the thing at the end of this sentence an inverted buttonhook?

★ ★ ★



"The secret of fish-and-chips is the fat it is fried in," says the Chairman of the Potato Marketing Board. The only trouble is keeping it secret.

★ ★ ★

Toodles, a cat that lives at Middletown, New York, is twenty-one years old and is quite healthy except that she is deaf. Her one worry is that mice may be talking about her behind her back.

★ ★ ★

"STANLEY BALDWIN has been the chief carpenter responsible for the sturdy bulwarks of the Ship of State," says a correspondent. Well, good-bye, Mr. Chips.

★ ★ ★

An Army dentist accuses soldiers of being afraid to get their teeth stopped. They probably feel they get quite enough drilling without that.

★ ★ ★

"Unless you like goats," advises the British Goat Society's Year Book, "it is much better to buy a scythe or a lawn-mower to keep down the grass." The trouble with us is that we don't like scythes or lawn-mowers either.

The New First Lord

"WHAT's going to happen to us now? That's what I'd like to know," said the Boatswain's Mate.

"You mean whether he's going to muck about with us, like he did the Army," murmured the Bandmaster.

"I don't think he can," said the Sergeant of Marines judicially. "With a young corps like the Army that sort of thing is all right. They don't deserve any better. But this regiment is different."

"Oh, I don't know," said the Chief Writer significantly. "They say he's got the mother-instinct, and you know how powerful mother-love is. Take fatigues, for instance."

"What's that?" asked the Stoker Petty Officer.

"Army talk for scrub and wash decks," explained the Sergeant-Major.

"Yes, and he's washed that out in the Army. They have civilians to clean up their mess for them."

There was a reflective pause. Such a proposal was on the surface so delightful that their suspicions were aroused. Then the Bandmaster spoke.

"You mean that a dockyard matie comes off to polish my trumpets?"

"More or less," the Chief Writer said.

"Well, I don't like it," muttered the Bandmaster. "I wouldn't trust a matie with a tin-whistle, and there's no saying what he would do if he was given a free hand with a trombone. No, I don't like it."



"HE SAYS WILL YOU PLAY A PAUL JONES?"

"No more do I," agreed the Boatswain's Mate. "A matie on board is no more nor less than——"

"Derogatory to God's honour and human decency," completed the Sergeant-Major helpfully. "That's what the book says."

"And that about puts it as I should. Them and their dinners and tool-bags! Coming off early in the morning to scrub *our* decks. I can see them! Two spits and a lick, *and* extra foreign service pay when the ship's at a buoy not more than a hundred yards from the wall."

"They're not going to touch my engines," said the Stoker Petty Officer threateningly.

"Perhaps," agreed the Chief Writer; "but there's lot else that might happen. Exercise, for instance. He made the soldiers jump over box-horses."

"What's that?" asked the Bandmaster anxiously.

"Physical drill," said the Sergeant-Major with a touch of relish. "'Sitdown, standup, topofthewallbars go!' and so on."

"Fitter Britain," explained the Chief Writer morbidly.

The Bandmaster regarded his ample middle for a moment and turned pale. Then he protested hopefully: "But we don't need that. Soldiers just sitting around in barracks do, of course. But what with climbing up ladders, falling down hatches, hanging on ropes, tripping over ring-bolts, dodging spray, climbing in hammocks, jumping into boats—why, we hardly sit still for a moment, do we?"

"You ain't a shadow all the same," scoffed the Stoker Petty Officer bitterly. "If you had to do what I do among the steam-pipes there would be some sense in talking. Cats on hot bricks is in repose compared with us."

"Maybe," agreed the Chief Writer. "But there's other things. Now in the Army he stopped stoppages of pay."

"Very nice too," murmured the Sergeant-Major.

"Yes," said the Chief Writer gloatingly, "but it just stands to reason that he's got to stop something with us."

"Such as?" asked the Boatswain's Mate.

"Ah! that's just the point. We don't know."

"It's hanging over us, like the sword of that Greek chap," said the Bandmaster with erudition.

"Exactly," said the Chief Writer, smiling grimly. "And that's only the beginning. He might be having trial sailors—chaps who only come up for six weeks, puts on fat and swank, and then goes home. Or publicity. He might advertise for us like they do for soldiers and tooth-paste; or making films. Then campaigns in the papers. You know, 'How I'd Run the Navy: Best letter published wins ten bob.'"

"I'd like to have a go at that," said the Stoker Petty Officer.

"Perhaps you would," the Chief Writer continued, now thoroughly warmed up. "Then handsome and more comfortable ships would be the motto, with roof-gardens on the quarter-deck and lace-curtains round the guns——"

"Hold hard!" said the Sergeant-Major. "That all may be; but we've got one thing to be thankful for."

"What?" asked the Stoker Petty Officer incredulously.

"And I bet he's gnashing his teeth," said the Sergeant-Major with slow satisfaction. "Our uniform's safe. We're blue already, and no one's brave enough to try and change *that*."

"His Lordship.—You are demanding with threats, and if you don't call that intimadion, what is intimidation? It might be legitimate or illegitimate, but it is intimidaton."—*Court Report.*

So that's settled.



BELISHA CROSSES OVER

A SURPRISE ITEM AT THE WHITEHALL TATTOO



THE BRITISH CHARACTER

A Weakness for Oak Beams

Teaching Our Grandmothers

Not so very long ago we had something to say—or at all events we said something—about the Telephone in Modern Fiction.

What about the Grandmother in Modern Fiction?

She comes into it nearly as often as the telephone, and is at least equally important. But whereas Fiction—in this resembling Real Life in rather an unusual way—only recognises two types of telephone (the dialling kind and the old-fashioned sort that one's aunt always maintains is so much nicer) there are at least three types of grandmother recognised by the modern fiction-writer. (Whether recognised by the modern fiction-reader or not is a very different question and one which we do not propose to broach.)

Free your mind from all associations with *Red Riding Hood*, whose experiences with her grandmother were rather unfortunate—and better perhaps free your mind from all associations with your own grandmother, in case the same thing applies there also.

Then ask yourself which you prefer of the three types of grandmother now prevalent in the pages of fiction.

In order to facilitate your decision we are very kindly offering you an example of each. We will begin with the Peasant Grandmother—almost certain to have a name like Selma or Katinka or even Sigurd. She has had to wrestle quite a lot in her strong quiet way with the crops and nature and immense quantities of children and a husband who may or may not be a good man but is always a failure as a breadwinner.

Does Selma, at the age of ninety-one (since the grandmothers of fiction always run to a ripe old age), give up the struggle and leave her descendants to look after themselves?

Not she.

"Old Selma came into the kitchen carrying a dozen blankets that she had just finished washing, mangling and ironing. She looked tenderly down over the tops of the blankets at her great-great-great-grandson asleep in the old wooden cradle that she had carried across the prairie, slung over her shoulders, seventy-five years ago.

"'Ah, little one! Sleep well,' she murmured, folding up the blankets and putting them away in the cupboard with a single skilful movement.

"'Not an hour ago I heard that my sons, my grandsons and almost all my great-grandsons had perished in the flood. Only I, who am growing old, am left to work the farm and provide for the child.'

"Sighing a little, old Selma lifted the huge iron kettle and put it on the fire."

And that probably will be the end of the book, though not, no doubt, of old Selma.

We will now take a step upward in the social scale.

What about the virile, high-handed grandmother who owns all the money in the family and lives in a large house with hundreds and hundreds of her descendants crawling about all over the place—mere parasites?

"The old lady sat up in her carved ivory bed, with her purple-and-gold shawl over her filmy lace nightdress, her diamonds scattered on the jade-green satin coverlet, her pet tiger-cub crouching at her feet and her two love-birds perched upon the top of her head.

"'Champagne!' she cried in a strong bold voice. 'I want my morning bottle of champagne!'

"It was her hundred-and-fifteenth birthday."

It is not unusual for this type of grandmother to die on the last page of the book in some rather spectacular manner. Perhaps just as she is blowing out the last candle on her hundred-and-fifteenth birthday-cake, which, after all, would be a bit of a strain on anybody.

Now we come to the utterly up-to-date grandmother; and her personality is usually found to have moved with the times, if not actually beyond them.

"Frustration. Anger, Bitter Laughter. Ha, ha, ha!

"He flung himself into the ballroom and grasped the first woman in his way—(fortunately it was a Paul Jones.)

"She looked at him strangely.

"'My grandson. Life. The cruelty of it.'

"'You feel that too?' he muttered. 'I must commit a murder to-night. The Party expects it of me.'

"'Shoot. Shoot straight.'

"He shot at her as they swayed to the rhythm of the saxophone.

"'Not at me,' she said crossly. 'At that cat Maisie Maryland. And you'll have to shoot straighter than that.'

"But he had collapsed, sodden with drink.

"His grandmother took the gun from him.

"'It's up to me I suppose,' she thought wearily."

Before we go any further—if ever we do—we are subjected to one of those interruptions that authors always appear to resent so bitterly and that are really such a welcome excuse for leaving the writing-table—or the arm-chair and the back pages of the washing book.

"Hallo! Yes, speaking. Oh, is that you, Grandmama?"

"It's only me, dear, and I hope I'm not interrupting, but it seems such a long while since I heard anything of the children, and I've been wondering what your plans for to-day are and whether you've had a letter from poor Aunt Florence just lately. I got a post-card on Tuesday telling one absolutely *nothing*. If you'll hold on a minute I'll look for it—if I can find my glasses. But I don't want to interrupt anything if you're busy. Only I've been so wondering if you've had any luck about a *nouvelle femme de chambre* instead of *cette* wretched Alice. . . ."

You see what I mean? E. M. D.

Correct Opinions

The Gallery-goer's Guide

Am I to understand, dear lady, that you thought this year's Academy "topping"? Madam, you cover me with confusion. (Waiter, another absinthe!) Conceal all those postcards, I beg you. One does not admit that anything in the Academy is any *good*. One is not even aware that it has opened. If one *must* retain an agreeable impression of it one should at least reflect how proportionately excellent the rejections must have been. Your favourite portrait—Merle Oberon? Ah, I feared as much. For Brockhurst, dear lady, one has learnt to purge one's former enthusiasm: this year he is indisputably *vieux jeu*—"shameless cinema," "liquid-eyed romanticism," "velvet-obsessed middle-class sensuousness" if you will, but no more. Yes, I agree one is facilely seduced by Russell Flint; but consider how much more attractive is the eccentricity of *failing to recognise* his work when one sees it, substantiated by such a vague observation as: "Of course one *literally fumbles for criteria* nowadays." The predominance of sucking-pigs in this year's Exhibition should, however, give one pause: Is English art, one speculates, becoming *porcocentric* under the sinister influence of the Pig Marketing Board?

One's appreciation of Dame Laura Knight should not be more than lukewarm now that she is an R.A. Sir William Rothenstein one should rate higher as an autobiographer than as a painter. A wry yet good-tempered "Ye-es; Lamorna Birch is of course—ah—Lamorna Birch," gives an impression of comfortable familiarity; while Augustus John is "absent by his conspicuousness." Original remarks are rather scarce this season, but a connoisseur of some standing may with unanswerable emphasis boldly assert that George Belcher is



"Ah, you want Smith, J. gngrcr; this is Smith, J. cntmkr."

potentially the WATTEAU of his age." Any opposition to this should be swiftly countered (palms widespread in helpless superiority) by: "But one simply does not *trouble* to substantiate the obvious. Why, the mere fact that he so militantly *differs* from WATTEAU," etc. A useful hint to keep in cold-storage for next year's Academy will be to cultivate an obstinate championship of A. J. MUNNINGS, supported naturally by a suitably *outré* comment, as, "The splendid insolence, mark you, of that *wantonly* irrelevant blue shadow on the fetlock . . ."

As for general gallery-deportment, the shrug is always preferable to the snort. The discovery of the year should be softly annihilated with: "Ah, well, the women's magazines are still open to him." Approval, if any, should be lavished upon a single exiguous miniature, which "must have crept in by mistake." Again, since it is customary to sneer at a picture of a large aristocratic family in attitudes of self-conscious naturalness before a rural background, or gingerly holding obsolete musical instruments, an impression of ruthlessly independent criticism may be created by drawing attention to the light on the fourth string of a lute, or ecstatically hailing the *rhythmic intensity* of a distant bulrush. All disquieting elements of style should be given the benefit of the doubt: thus, if an artist specialises in models whose bodies look as if they could be unscrewed and dismantled within a few seconds it is prudent moderately to praise the "indomitable *synthesis* of the man." Of a brilliant and glaring painter in any gallery—say, J. M. W. TURNER—one may enigmatically observe: "A pity, is it not, that one is required to surrender one's parasol at the door?" Insufficiently sensuous nudes may be brushed aside as "vile bodies."

Be chary about concurring with the opinion of a fellow gallery-goer: an amused "So *I* used to think" will seldom fail you. A sudden hearty "By Jove! he gets away with it too!" in front of almost any insignificant-looking sketch should at once make a pleasant stir. A merry quip for the vestibule: "STEPHEN and MUIRHEAD? Let us make no Bones about *them!*" A charming inanity, ideal for a pretty schoolgirl: "DOD PROCTER? You know I *always* want to say 'Prod doctor'!" A knock-out blow: "Even the owner is ashamed of it—I see it is anonymously lent." As for postcards—not more than *one* should be bought on leaving the building; for preference a whimsical elevation of Epsom Public Baths from the Architectural Room.

In any gallery sing the praises of another gallery. In the Louvre, for example, one should recall the treasures of the Uffizi; in Bond Street remember Fifth Avenue or the Rue de la Paix. It is not essential to have read ROGER FRY; he is rather *fin de décade* anyway. Continual use of the phrases "Vulgar perfection" and "Trivial realism" will do just as well. Indeed an excellent pose is to affect an exclusive absorption in comic-strips (folk frescology), which leads naturally to the yet bolder idiosyncrasy, that "For me, I am afraid, art begins and ends with the Bayeux Tapestry."

Detailed knowledge is never necessary. The Dutch and Flemish Masters may be dismissed as "all perspiration and perspective" or "mere photography." REMBRANDT one "takes in one's stride." In the Italian Primitives one still "revels masochistically." One bitterly regrets one's adolescent homage to the "half-hearted pornography" of the Florentines, while retaining a reluctant admiration for "that brilliant charlatan DA VINCI." To be commended too is a perverse preference for GIOTTO's imitators rather than for GIOTTO himself. "Simpering cherubs," were you about to say, dear lady? You allude, I take it, to MICHELANGELO. Really, Madam, I begin to have hopes for your judgment.

It is unwise not to include a minor French Impressionist among one's *quondam* passions. If challenged for a definition, ask, "Is not all art impressionism?" RENOIR is at present no more than "superior chocolate-box," but be prepared for a boom in his favour next year. GAUGUIN should perhaps "have confined himself to crimson bananas" after all. At CÉZANNE one is nowadays free to snigger. Never commit the irreparable solecism of confusing MANET with MONET: know that they are different, but be not uneasy if you cannot tell them apart. If VAN GOGH's distressingly popular cypresses still adorn your mantelpiece, pluck them down, I beseech: a framed TENNIEL roughly torn from *Alice in Wonderland* will reveal shrewder integrity of taste. One should be familiar with at least *one* PICASSO: the safest adjective is "tendentious," qualified by "—a nice fellow, though. Must look him up again next time I'm in Paris."

Finally, it is suicidal not to enter into the conventional complaint about the bad hanging of pictures; and above all never risk ruining the critical faculty by any attempt of your own at painting. And now go and have your lovely afternoon at the Tate if you must; but—— Ah, waiter! another absinthe.



"I'M SO WORRIED, DOCTOR; HIS LORDSHIP'S BEEN ASLEEP SINCE MAY THE TWELFTH."

Surprise

THE most surprising thing about the B.B.C. is that it should be so surprised whenever it succeeds in producing a surprise. Surprised and shocked.

For the essence of entertainment, as of drama, is often surprise; and if we could expect each week a surprise or two such as we have had recently the listeners would be almost as numerous as the licence-holders. Thousands of miles of blameless "radio" are reeled off by this admirable Corporation every week without causing so much as a ripple in the pool of the national life. Every announcement, every talk, has been inspected and countersigned and sealed and certified and disinfected and pasteurised, and has, for most of us brutes who do not listen conscientiously, no more visible effect than a glass of milk. But let one stray, natural, unrehearsed, unorganised word sneak into the microphone and we prick up the national ear at once. Even the Imperial and World ears are tickled. I have talked to no man who did not agree that the Naval Review evening commentary was one of the most admirable turns ever put on by the B.B.C. It was like the judge's little joke which, dropping unexpectedly from a reverend wig into the solid dreariness of a Chancery case, convulses all present; it was like the parson dropping his spectacles from the pulpit; it was like the man in the top-hat slipping up on a banana-skin—the sudden irruption of incongruous humanity into an area of dignity and calm. The B.B.C. should do it again.



"WE GET THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE HERE IN AUGUST; THEY COME FOR THE SOLITUDE."

But no; instead of patting itself on the back, instead of promising a repeat performance, the B.B.C. confesses and apologizes and grovels to the delighted world. I should add, in fairness, that it seems to be taking a humane and generous line towards the principal performer: but that is not enough. When are we to have more of these entertaining "incidents"? At one time the Corporation did seem to have the right idea, for there was a series of Surprise Items. But that was the right idea gone wrong. For a surprise that comes when you are expecting a surprise is only half a surprise, and it may be a disappointment. When Mamma says that next Saturday we are to have a "surprise" we inevitably imagine new bicycles, steam-engines, seats at the play or whatnot; and when the treat turns out to be milk-pudding done in a new way, despondency occurs. The new pudding that appears without warning, the utterly unexpected threepenny-bit—these are the true and successful surprises.

All this, I have no doubt, is to be found in BERGSON, HOBBES, LOCKE and the other big authorities on fun, though probably it is not so well done.

What then? The B.B.C.'s course is obvious. There must be a Surprise Department. Its plans must be kept absolutely secret from all but the highest officials—and even perhaps from them—yes, certainly from them. Its task must be to make a list of all the most solemn or heavy occasions and speckle them with ingenious and deplorable surprises—not too many, for that would spoil the thing. But at every broadcast from a public dinner let there be a surprise. All those little asides should be recorded:—

"Isn't that my port?"

"I've got to propose 'The Guests,' and I never heard of one of them."

"I wish to goodness they'd bring the cigars!"

"Who *is* this bore?"

"The fish was frightful."

"Do you think we could slip out after 'The Club'?"

Sometimes, even now, they do emerge, and the world loves them. But the B.B.C. is horrified and whispers horror and regret in the Third News. It may be that even stronger measures will commend themselves to the Department. It may be that if it is necessary for the world to hear Sir Eldred Mutt proposing the health of The Chamber of Commerce some special antidote will be required. Someone, unknown to him, might be making a running commentary on his remarks as they proceed. White mice might be let loose among the ladies. A well-trained parrot might interrupt.

Then there are the concerts and operas. I love to hear the orchestra "tuning-up"; but I should also like to hear its conversation: what racing-tips the first violin passes when he has got his A, and what the trombone says about the conductor.

However, all the details I leave with confidence to the proposed Department. Indeed there have been so many "incidents" and surprises lately that I sometimes wonder whether the Department does not exist already. Clever B.B.C. A. P. H.



"NOW LET'S POLISH *ME*, NANNY."

The Interview

"Now then, boys, none of your joshing," said Mr. Kibitzer amiably as the reporters surged into his office. "I've bought the things and that's all there is to it."

"Ah, but why did you take such a drastic step?" asked a tall thin reporter, going up close and staring at Mr. Kibitzer with curiosity like a dog.

Mr. Kibitzer leaned back in his chair. "As a lover of art," he said. A murmur went round the room and a young man near the door could be heard asking his neighbour how to spell art. "S–I–Z–E," replied his neighbour kindly.

Mr. Kibitzer carefully placed his cigar on the edge of a massive ash-tray and stood up, straightening his coat. "Boys—and girls," he began, bowing to two young women near the window, "lemme make a statement." Everybody looked up, except a man who had just dropped a cigarette in his lap. "You want to know," Mr. Kibitzer went on, "what my plans are with regard to the very beautiful and impressive Coronation decorations from the front of the Mammoth Stores, which I have just bought——"

The man who was looking for the cigarette said in a low tone, "He means purchased."

"—in the face," said Mr. Kibitzer, "of considerable competition."

"Is it right that you paid seventeen thousand pounds, Mr. Kibitzer?"

Mr. Kibitzer jumped. "Seventeen th—— Say, what do you boys think I am?"

"We thought you might have been able to dig that much up," called out the young man who had been told how to spell art, "from somewhere."

"You misunderstand me," Mr. Kibitzer said hastily, picking up his cigar. "It isn't a question of having the money. It's a question of spending it on—on—well——"

"But aren't you a lover of art, Mr. Kibitzer?"

"That's just the point," someone murmured.

After a moment's thought Mr. Kibitzer assumed an air of pathos. "Now, girls and boys," he said, "gimme a chance. Not so much chaff. You want the facts out of me, and the sooner you let me explain——"

"—the longer we shall take."

"What we don't understand," said the tall thin reporter who had spoken first, "is why you should have bought the things. We look on you, Mr. Kibitzer, as connected with the entertainment business."

"And isn't art entertainment?" Mr. Kibitzer cried with a generous fire. "Boys and girls, I can say without boasting that my whole life has been devoted to a principle, a noble principle: the bringing closer together of art and entertainment—of entertainment and art."

"What, both at once?" said a voice.

"Who, then," Mr. Kibitzer went on, "could be a better fellow than me to deal with these impressive sculptural decorations which everybody will be the first to admit combine entertainment with art in a way never before attempted in the history of mankind?"

In the silence that followed this daring declaration Mr. Kibitzer was disappointed to observe that nobody seemed to be taking it down. At length one of the reporters by the door was to be heard muttering: "After all, I suppose they might come under the heading of Humour."

"What about that statement?" the man next to him called out.

Mr. Kibitzer looked round winningly as if this were the first time the matter had entered his head. "Ladies and gentlemen," he beamed, "any information I can give, say, why I'll be only too happy——"

"There are just two things we want to know," the tall thin reporter tried again. "How much you paid for the stuff and what you're going to do with it."

"What *in thunder* you're going to do with it," corrected the man who had been looking for his cigarette. He was now busy lighting another from the butt.

"Well, as for what I paid," Mr. Kibitzer waved his cigar, "you boys seem to have heard rumours that I paid seventeen thousand pounds."

The young man who had suggested this figure, the first impossibly high one that came into his head, looked up alertly and said, "You confirm those rumours, Mr. Kibitzer?"

"Well, not exactly. And as for what is going to be done with the decorations," Mr. Kibitzer proceeded quickly, "I'm sorry, boys and girls, but I can't reveal that until negotiations are over."

"I knew it. He's going to sell 'em again," the man with the cigarette said under his breath. At the same moment one of the girls said, "Negotiations with another lover of art, Mr. Kibitzer?"

Realising that he had used the wrong word, Mr. Kibitzer occupied himself for a second or two in looking impressive, and then inquired in a stern tone: "Did you people ever hear of the Victoria and Albert Museum?"

This roused a good deal of comment, two typical remarks being, "Where are they going to put 'em there? On the roof?" and "You weren't thinking of Madame TUSSAUD'S, were you?"

However, when the interview ended some fifteen minutes later he felt fairly sure that most of his visitors believed he had bought the decorations for a large sum (though possibly not £17,000) in order to present them to a museum (though possibly not the Victoria and Albert). That, in print, would be what Mr. Kibitzer called a bit of good personal publicity.

He was therefore all the more annoyed when what the papers printed was a brief paragraph to the effect that the Mammoth Stores had disposed of their decorations at so much a hundredweight to an unnamed representative of a firm of fuel-brick manufacturers.

"After all the trouble I took over those rumours beforehand," Mr. Kibitzer commented in disgust, "they have to go and print the truth." R. M.

Sky Signs

I LIKE the sky. Though it be clear or grey
Or even black, I like it any way.

I like to see sharp hills against the blue;
Trees have the same effect; I like that too.

I like to watch the lively rook; I like
The screaming gull, the kittiwake and shrike.

Indeed, I might with honesty declare
That I like almost anything up there.

I see an aeroplane aloft; its tail
Puffs certain goods, in heaven's vault, for sale.

Are not our hoardings and our Press enough
For enterprising firms with wares to puff?

Have we no Underground, no Tube, no bus
That our pure sky should be affronted thus?

Cannot, I ask, the whole broad earth suffice
For this gross need? And Echo answers "Twice."

Yet even here advertisement may lend
Her useful aid. She likes to recommend

Her goods down here, till we, unthinking, yearn
For some queer cause to give the thing a turn.

So these same articles that flout the sky
We can resolve on no account to buy. DUM-DUM.



"THERE! *THAT* TIME I GOT RIGHT ACROSS WITHOUT HITTING ANYTHING."

Mostly Shop

"This is a nicely-balanced model," said the assistant, delivering yet another umbrella into my unwilling hands.

It might come as a surprise to some people to find themselves buying an umbrella at the beginning of the summer, but it came as no surprise to me. As a matter of fact I do most of my umbrella-buying in June, just as I am often to be seen purchasing skates in August and ordering hammocks and sun-helmets in the middle of winter. There doesn't seem to be any very satisfactory explanation of this curious procedure. It certainly has nothing to do with getting things cheaper out of season, because I haven't enough cunning or efficiency for that kind of economy and in my experience the price of skates doesn't drop a halfpenny even in the hottest months. If anything, it tends to rise by the time the assistant has knocked down all the tennis-rackets in an attempt to get at the cupboard where (erroneously as it turns out) he imagines the skates to be. Nor is it because, like the energetic rich, I am always rushing off to cold places in the summer and hot ones in the winter. You might call it just an idiosyncrasy if you liked. Whatever the reason for this habit of mine it must be pleasantly encouraging for the manufacturers. It puts a kink in their sales-charts just where it's most badly needed. "If we've sold a hammock in December," they say, observing it, "can spring be far behind?" And they go on tying knots with renewed zest.

You may picture me, then, in the torrid atmosphere of last week, busy putting a kink in the umbrella-makers' sales-chart.

"Yes," I said, "that seems to be all right," and I swung the umbrella which the assistant had handed me to and fro in the air to see how nicely-balanced it was. It had a knobbly cane handle with a silver band round it, and it looked very cool and slim and unapproachable in its tight-fitting black jacket. There was a longish pause.

"Wolf frame?" I asked, for something to say.

"We only stock Wolf's," said the man. "Allow me, Sir."

He gently repossessed himself of the umbrella and with inconceivable swiftness stripped off the cover, unlatched the thingummy, shook out the folds and returned the thing to me hoisted and ready for action. It was all over so quickly I had no chance to protest.

This penchant of umbrella-salesmen for opening their wares on the slightest provocation, or indeed on no provocation at all, distresses me for at least four good reasons: (1) It is unlucky to open an umbrella indoors. (2) It is sheer wantonness to disturb the virgin symmetry of a new umbrella without just cause. (3) There is no just cause when I am the customer. I should be perfectly prepared to take the man's word for it that he is not trying to sell me a dummy. (4) Anybody would feel a fool holding an open umbrella in a shop on a hot day in June. So I took the thing from him with a good deal of reluctance.

"Now you've done it," I said.

"Sir?"

"You'll never get it back again into its little waistcoat."

But he did. He shut it and shook it and twirled it and twisted it, and before you could say "Gamp" it was back in its case as neat and gentlemanly as ever. Then he handed it to me again with the little bow of the conscious artist.

"It carries well," I said, though I hadn't the remotest idea what I meant. After which I laid it reverently on the counter alongside the eleven umbrellas already there. Instantly the man produced another from his inexhaustible store.

This is another grievance I have against umbrella-men—and against hosiers and hatters and the whole tribe of them for that matter. The moment you lay a thing down they think you've dismissed it as impossible and immediately whip out another for your inspection. Whereas the fact is I hardly ever make up my mind against anything at once, unless it happens to be purple or covered with beadwork. I like to get two or three pairs of socks or sun-helmets or whatever it may be I am hoping to purchase and lay them side by side for leisurely comparison. Then I am able to ask myself, Do I prefer the ventilation holes at the sides or on the top? and again, Is a brown chin-strap more suitable than a green one for my age and position? These are the sort of questions I like to ask, and it takes time to answer them. But it is utterly hopeless if the assistant keeps on bringing out more and more sun-helmets and confusing the mind with fresh speculations and possibilities. When one is already busy weighing up the rival attractions of a thick knobbly handle and a thin knobbly handle, a smooth grey one without a silver band and a rather racy-looking black chap with white speckles, what is the use of clouding the issue by adding an umbrella with a glass handle and tassels?

All this may help to explain why, when the assistant produced his thirteenth exhibit, I determined to make a stand.

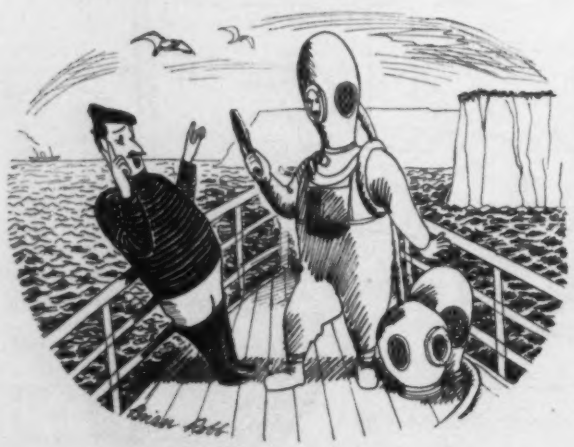
"I shan't be wanting more than a dozen," I said mildly.

"Very good, Sir," he said, whipping out his note-book. "And where may I have the pleasure of sending them?"

I don't know whether you have ever tried to explain to an umbrella-salesman that it was just your fun. I haven't. I didn't feel it would be worth while. Besides, if a man is fool enough to stroll into a shop where they obviously make a practice of selling umbrellas by the dozen even in June, it is up to him to take the consequences. That, at any rate, is how it seems to me. So I gave him the name and address of a friend of mine and asked him to send them C.O.D.

Then we parted—I think for ever.

H. F. E.



"Don't you think it's a little outré?"

"Her eyes filled with tears and began to roll down her massive cheeks."—*From a recent book.*

Isn't grief hideous?

Clearing the Car

Monsieur Fracas is returning to Egypt. On this occasion he has decided to land at Port Said, bringing with him a motor-car upon which he will have to pay duty. It is the intention of Monsieur Fracas to clear his car from the Custom House and drive it immediately to Cairo.

Monsieur Fracas' ship reaches Port Said early in the morning and anchors, as is customary, in the middle of the harbour. And at eight o'clock Monsieur Fracas and his motor-car disembark and proceed towards the Custom House, the one in a motor-boat and the other upon a lighter. Owing to the superior speed of the motor-boat Monsieur Fracas arrives first at the Custom House and to save time he goes inside to clear his baggage. When this has been done he hurries back to the quay, eager to complete his business and proceed to Cairo. But here a disappointment awaits him. Not only has the car not arrived, but the lighter which was conveying it has entirely disappeared from view. Monsieur Fracas scans the harbour with growing anxiety and returns hastily to the Custom House.

"It is incredible," he says to an official, "that the car should not have arrived. Some steps must immediately be taken."

The official remains calm.

"Never mind," he says, "the delay will no doubt be easily explained. Sit down and I will make an inquiry."

Monsieur Fracas sits down and after he has cooled his heels for half-an-hour the official returns. The car, he states, in the tone of one who brings consoling news, has been landed, but owing to a whimsical misunderstanding it has been landed not at the Custom House but in a remote part of the Bonded Warehouses. The official smiles indulgently at the thought of this curious mistake, but Monsieur Fracas is not mollified. He thinks of his journey to Cairo and leaps indignantly to his feet.

"But this," he cries, "is nothing less than an abomination. To-day—in an hour's time—I must take the car to Cairo. Go, therefore, and arrange that it shall be brought immediately to the Custom House."

The official is aghast at the intemperateness of this demand. He spreads out his hands in the deprecating manner of one who has been suddenly invited to perform a miracle, and it is not until Monsieur Fracas has exhausted all the eloquence at his command that he reluctantly agrees to bring the car.



"VERY ENTERTAININ', 'ERBERT, AND, IF YER FOLLER ME, *INSTRUCTIVE*."

Monsieur Fracas waits for another half-hour and by the time that the car has arrived his patience is gravely impaired. Putting aside the formal apologies of the official, he demands brusquely how much duty he will have to pay. But it appears that the time for payment has not yet arrived. The official produces a formidable document, in which every matter relevant to a motor-car, from the country of its origin to the precise number of buttons on its upholstery, is made the subject of meticulous investigation. When this document has been completed in duplicate by a clerk who would clearly rather devote the entire day to the task than permit haste to betray him into the slightest error, Monsieur Fracas is almost beside himself. He draws out his wallet with a flourish.

"At last," he says with a fine irony, "I may pay and take my car to Cairo."

"Not so," says the official. "The value of the car must be assessed, and this may be done only by the Official Estimator."

The official departs to summon the Estimator, and after Monsieur Fracas has waited for half-an-hour he returns to say that the Estimator is not present. He is in fact spending the day at home in well-deserved leisure. But the next day, he adds consolingly,

or the day after, he will assuredly return and then the business may be satisfactorily concluded. This news destroys utterly Monsieur Fracas' faith in human nature. He leaps to his feet as if he had been stung by a hornet.

"But this is a torment!" he shouts. "Have I not told you, hen-brain, that it is not a question of to-morrow or next week or in a month's time? It is to-day that I must take my car to Cairo."

The official is unnerved by the vehemence of Monsieur Fracas.

"Never mind," he says hastily, "I will summon the Estimator. Immediately, in an hour, he will be here."

Conquering a strong inclination to seize his beard and pluck it out by the roots, Monsieur Fracas clasps his hands stoically behind his back and walks up and down the Custom House. He continues to walk up and down until he has covered an estimated distance of four kilometres. But at last, when the last vestiges of his self-control are melting like butter in a frying-pan, the Estimator arrives, the value of the car is assessed and the amount of duty calculated. With the relief of a man who has at last succeeded in completely decapitating the Hydra Monsieur Fracas pays the duty and walks triumphantly to the car. But before he can reach it he is stopped by a policeman.

"Not so fast," says the policeman. "If you wish to withdraw the car from the Customs enclosure it will be necessary first to go to the police-station and obtain a permit. Moreover, if you wish to drive the car to Cairo you must also go to the office of the Suez Canal Company and obtain a permit to use the Canal Company's road, which is the only road."

As a man who has been impaled with swords will accept with resignation the added affliction of a pin-prick, so Monsieur Fracas listens to the policeman's words with a gentle apathy. He goes to the police-station. He goes to the office of the Suez Canal Company. And at last everything is arranged. Once more Monsieur Fracas approaches his car. With the tolerance of a righteous man who has forgiven his enemies he salutes the policeman and bows to the Customs officials.

"*Voilà!*" he says as he takes his place in the driver's seat. "In spite of all I go to Cairo."

But before he can start there is a sudden tumult in the Custom House and the Director himself rushes out.

"Stop!" says the Director, waving the document which contains the description of Monsieur Fracas' car, "for a false declaration of the utmost gravity has been made. It appears," continues the Director, looking menacingly at Monsieur Fracas, "that your car has fifty-five buttons upon its upholstery, while our records show that all other cars of the same make have but fifty-two. The car therefore should have been declared in the category of Experimental Types, and for the breach of this regulation a fine of twenty pounds must be imposed. Moreover," says the Director, "the car may by no means be used upon the public roads until its suitability has been certified by the Chief Government Engineer, who is at present in Europe."

The Tragical History of Clementine

"In a cavern in a canyon,
Excavating for a mine,
Lived a miner, forty-niner,
And his daughter Clementine."

THE lines are well-known. What is not well-known is that their theme has long been a favourite with poets. The unpublished works of MILTON, THOMAS HOOD, WORDSWORTH and WALT WHITMAN all contain attempts to treat it. The reader may be interested to compare the respective versions of these writers.

'Tis told in fabled song how Clementine,
Fair sprout excavatorial, whose renown
Men still indite, and with flat-warbled air
And descant false her mournful name repeat,
Once toward their liquid pasture chanced to induce
Her web-foot infantry, the webbiest feet
Her own, nor noted how athwart her path
A traitorous splinter (engine of dire woe)
Lay all concealed, as that insidious fish
In sanded ambush hid, protends his spear
Invisible, so to probe the unwary toe
And fill the mouth with loud blasphemings rude:
Even so that shaft mortiferous lay concealed,
Whereon she stumbling, and unstabilised
Her equipoise, into the spuming deeps
Fell sheer. Her swain the sad mischance beheld,
Beheld from safety, and to share declined.
Awhile thereafter her demise he mourned
With show of specious grief, nor long, but soon,
Her sister's consort, thought of her no more.

★ ★ ★

Young Edward was a grocer's boy,
A gallant lad and fine;
He loved a simple farmer-girl
Whose name was Clementine.

But jealous Fortune grudged the youth
The flower that he was plucking;
She took her ducks to swim one day
And then she took a ducking.

"O Edward, save me quick!" she cried,
"I'm drowning in the mere, O!"
Said Edward, "No Leander I—
I cannot be your Hero."

And then he turned his sorrowing steps
Towards "The Dog and Bone";
He left her in her watery bier
And sadly sought his own.

Awhile his heart was sick with woe,
But not for long he missed her;
Since he could not assist her plight
He went to plight her sister.

★ ★ ★

Once, by yon lake's deserted side,
An aged figure stood;
In sorrow, not untouched by pride,
He gazed into the flood.

"Why, worthy sage," I questioned him—
"Why stand you tarrying here
With downcast brow and eyes so dim?
Why stare you at this mere?"

At first the old man answered not,
But speech at length he found:
"It was at this unhappy spot
The maid I loved was drowned."

It pained me very much to know
What troubles he had had,
And I replied in accents low,
"But that was very sad."

"Why, no, Sir," he observed; "my life
Has pleased me on the whole;
I have her sister Nell to wife,
An estimable soul.

And often will the children dear
(Such boons kind heaven may grant)
Come thronging round my knees to hear
The story of their aunt."

★ ★ ★

Of all the nonsense that accumulated
is human wisdom,
One thing only makes sense and is truly wise:
As with metres, so is it also with sisters—
One
Is commonly as good as another.

You Have Been Warned.

"It is unfortunately true of this age, as with every other age, that the poor can be defrauded with impunity.—*The Archbishop of Canterbury.*

"See —— Bros.' list of used car bargains on page 9."—*Hants Paper.*

Superior People



"Get up, Edna. Here comes George with the milk."

We simply cannot understand it; we have tried and failed. The worry, the excitement and the fuss absolutely stagger us. I refer of course to the ridiculous preparations made by would-be travellers. Weeks before the proposed departure the wretched wayfarer begins to fret about his passport. He has his photograph taken, with horrible results; he fills up a form, meekly answering grossly familiar questions about his person. After this he pores over booklets supplied by travel agencies, making the lives of the clerks intolerable by endless inquiries with regard to berths, reserved seats and refreshment facilities. Hotels are bombarded with letters demanding information about the aspects of rooms, nature of amusements provided, and the possibilities of obtaining favourite newspapers and patent medicines.

The selection of his personal effects causes laughable mental effort. Shall he take two large suitcases, three medium, or a trunk and an attaché-case? He wishes to be burdened with as little as possible, but also to be prepared for heat, rain, snow, ice, mist, blizzards and monsoons. This problem solved, he finds that half his chosen garments are dirty, torn, faded, shiny or too tight in the waist. Laundry, invisible mender, dry-cleaner, tailor and wife suffer accordingly.

But all this is as nothing compared with the horrors of the ritual known as Shutting Up the House. He begins to issue instructions days beforehand to such deputies as he has appointed to water the greenhouse, forward the letters (but none with halfpenny stamps) and succour the cat. He removes the ignition-key from the car and promptly mislays it. He turns the wireless off at the main switch, and, if he can find the ignition-key, conveys the silver to the bank. The police are informed that he is abandoning his home and that he looks to them to protect it from thugs, bandits and foreign agitators. He uses his projected holiday as an excuse for leaving bills unpaid, letters unanswered and his Aunt Emily unvisited. His neighbours are graciously invited to pick in his absence his few miserable roses.

How different it is with us! We seldom decide until the last moment that we are going away at all. Reading the morning paper, we observe that Lady X or Count Sokobeano or the Abbot of Asp is expected in London. Frowning darkly, we summon our man. "Pack our things immediately," we say, "we are going abroad." "Very good, Sir," the servant replies. If not well-trained he may add, "But your dress-shirts, Sir! You have a bare three dozen available; the rest are at the wash." "They can be sent on by air-mail," we answer tersely. "When does the next boat sail for"—a name in the paper catches our eye—"Paramaribo?" "To-morrow afternoon, Sir," he replies promptly. "Good. You will accompany me. Make all the necessary arrangements." The man bows and withdraws.

The simplicity of it! Nothing hinders us. We never possess pet animals or gardens or fishponds. Our children are never due for half-term holidays. We do not promise in advance to attend charity functions or visit sick friends. Impending annual visits of relatives are calamities we avoid, as are previously-arranged appointments with sweeps, piano-tuners, window-cleaners, hairdressers or dentists. Mere social engagements we break with laconic telegrams stating that we have been "called away."

You think we all belong to the wealthy classes? By no means. But the penniless amongst us are equally sensible. Packing, for all of us, is child's play. Our wives are the least fussy of women. Their wardrobes consist of unspecified diaphanous garments which they keep well-crumpled in drawers. They have only to drag a suitcase from beneath their beds and fill it with mixed chiffon to be ready for any journey. Both sexes, in fact, discovered in crime, or (as more frequently happens) nobly shouldering another's guilt, can vanish within the hour. For we are characters in films—and what are passports to us?



Bloomsbury Hostess. "DARLING! HOW TOO DIVINELY ILL YOU'RE LOOKING!"

Noctuary

IT's a wonderful thought,
I think, the thought
of the countryside at night.
To undress in a bath of moonlight—
to hurl up one's bedroom window and lean on the sill—
to listen to how quiet everything is, how still—
to have one's nose
assailed by the scent of honeysuckle and rose—
to look wonderingly up into the starry sky.
But as a matter of fact, I
have always found that on flinging my casement wide
all that happens is that a mass of repellent creatures come inside,
so that in an instant, instead of feeling deliciously romantic,
I am quite frantic,
slashing around at moths
with cloths;
dissuading earwigs from climbing into my bed;
banging mosquitoes on the head,
and, worst of all, meeting in some unexpected place,
face to invisible face
with a spider! Now, you know there's a disgrace in
drowning a spider in a basin,
Therefore the beastly thing has to be persuaded—
yes, if you please, it has to be aided
courteously with a toothglass and a book
to take a look
at the great outdoors. At last, when exhausted I creep
between the sheets, simply languishing for sleep,
the furniture creaks,
bats whirl about outside emitting shrill falsetto squeaks,
little twigs scratch eerily at the window-panes,
and the drains
are, it seems, entirely full of demented mice
playing hysterical games with one another. No, it is not nice—
not nearly as nice as it sounds to spend
a week-end
in some country resort.
In fact if you want peace you ought
to stay in London. There you can open your window o' nights
and nothing will come in except the glow of neon lights.
Not a bat, not a spider, not a mouse,
while you gaze at the moon hanging low over Grosvenor House
and hear the soothing hum of homecoming traffic in the street,
the air smelling sweet
of a mixture of watered tar and trees.
A soft breeze
ruffles the flags on Belfridge's roof-top;
flip they go, and flop,
while a policeman leans against the area railings beneath
humming a tuneless ditty through his teeth.
No screech-owl
or other nocturnal fowl
utters a harsh discordant cry;
and I,
sitting half in and half out of my room,
listen to the comforting boom
of Big Ben, now and then
dreaming of course of the endless delight
of the countryside at night.

V. G.



THE STROLLING PLAYERS

FRANCE. "THOSE TWO SEEM TO BE ALWAYS WALKING OUT ON US."

JOHN BULL. "WELL, HOWEVER AWKWARD IT IS FOR THE REST OF US, THE SHOW MUST GO ON."

Impressions of Parliament

Synopsis of the Week

***Monday, May 31st.*—Commons: Debate on Finance Bill.**

***Tuesday, June 1st.*—Lords: Debate on Coronation Traffic.**

Commons: Debate on Finance Bill. N.D.C. abandoned.

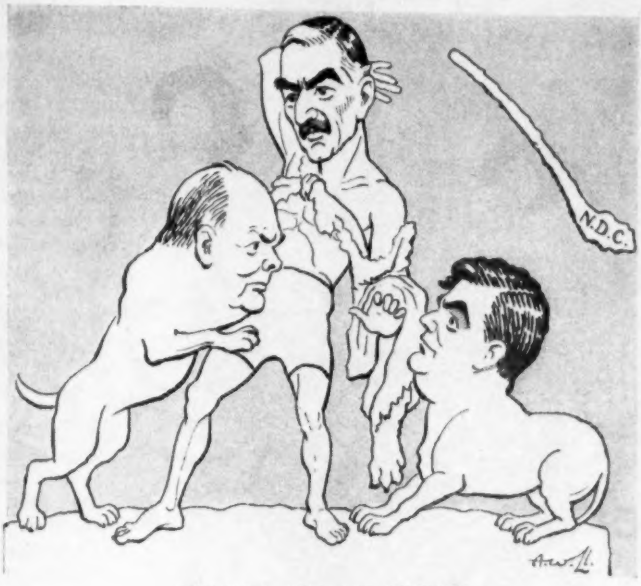
***Wednesday, June 2nd.*—Commons: Debate on the Vote for the Colonial Office.**

Monday, May 31st.—Three Englishmen have been misguided enough (to say the least) to try to act as *entrepreneurs* in an arms deal between two foreign countries. Their names, given to the House of Commons this afternoon by Mr. EDEN, in answer to a question from Captain CAZALET, are Mr. HERVEY, the Marquess of DONEGALL and Mr. JOHN LONSDALE, and last March they distinguished themselves by touting in Finland for arms and munitions for Brazil, a destination which one gathered might be translated into General FRANCO. Fortunately their lack of authorisation from the Brazilian Government was enough for Finland, which broke off negotiations. But British credit abroad is not improved.

At the end of Questions, brief and charming speeches were made in praise of Mr. BALDWIN, Mr. ATTLEE describing him as a great Parliamentarian, both in judging the sense of the House and in responding to its moods, who inspired affection even in those who were most opposed to him as a politician. Sir ARCHIBALD SINCLAIR referred to his breadth of human sympathy and understanding, and they both welcomed Mr. CHAMBERLAIN into his new office; Sir ARCHIBALD asking to be allowed to do so as one angler to another, and submitting that the salmon of the new P.M. were less of a fiction than the pigs of the old one. Had Mr. BALDWIN ever been photographed leaning against the wall of a pig-sty? He thought not.

In his reply Mr. CHAMBERLAIN spoke of Mr. BALDWIN's love of truth which only wavered occasionally, and to no purpose, when he described himself as a plain ordinary man; of his great qualities as a friend and a counsellor, and of his instinctive knowledge of the mind of the man-in-the-street.

With these tributes the House was clearly very much in sympathy.



ACTAEON AND HIS HOUNDS
(*After the statue in the British Museum*)
MR. CHAMBERLAIN ASSAILED BY MR. CHURCHILL AND MR. BOOTHBY.

Afterwards Sir JOHN SIMON opened his innings as Chancellor with an able attempt against hopeless odds to persuade the House that the N.D.C. tax was worth all the trouble it was causing and was going to cause.



MR. DE ROTHSCHILD TAKES UP THE WHITE MAN'S BURDEN.

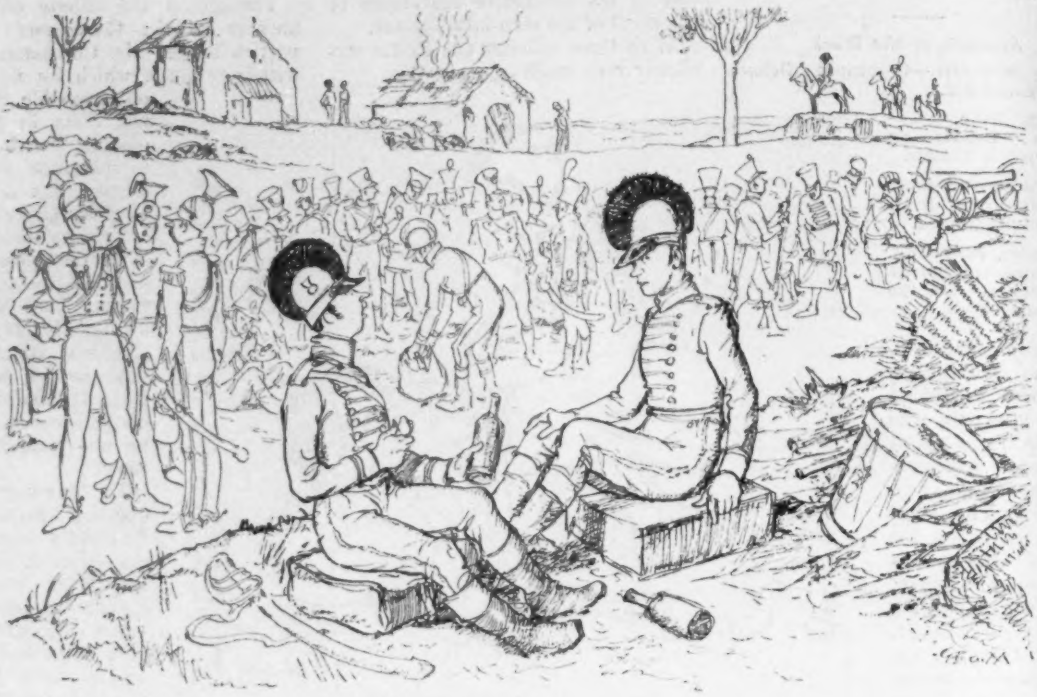
Throughout the debate one after another of the Government's supporters begged Mr. CHAMBERLAIN to withdraw a tax which by its many objectionable features put them in a most difficult position, and to substitute for it a simpler tax designed to give a larger yield.

Tuesday, June 1st.—When the Upper House met this afternoon Lord SNELL, Lord MERSEY and Lord HALIFAX paid eloquent tribute for their parties to Mr. BALDWIN, and congratulated themselves that he was soon to join them.

In answer to a question from Lord ELIBANK about the congestion of traffic at the Abbey after the Coronation, Lord DUFFERIN revealed the entertaining fact that, while rain heavy enough to leak through awnings had been the chief cause of the trouble, the arrangements had suffered an added complication in the unexpected rapidity with which those Peers who crossed to the Houses of Parliament for lunch had consumed it. He also made the sensible suggestion that on future occasions cars should be parked in some place like the Horse Guards, which Abbey guests could reach by taxi.

At Question-time in the Commons Mr. EDEN, expressing his regret at the German and Italian withdrawal from the Non-Intervention Committee, explained that the Spanish Government had not asked for the early meeting of the League Council which Mr. ATTLEE had proposed.

In the continued debate on the Finance Bill only two things mattered, but they mattered very much. The first was that Mr. CHURCHILL, tilting at the N.D.C., ran into his richest form and treated the House for nearly an hour to a faultless example of the almost forgotten art of making a political speech at the same time sharply effective and tremendously funny. It was a notable exhibition by a master, and it was evident from the beginning that Mr. CHURCHILL was out to enjoy himself. He took an avuncular interest in the new Government, he



"WELL, IF 'E DIDN'T SAY 'UP, GUARDS, AND AT 'EM!' HE SAID SOMETHING VERY LIKE IT."

said (though why he did not know), and though he himself would have gone as far as a capital levy after the War, conditions were now different, and he asked the P.M. to be bold and drop altogether a tax which would be more trouble than it was worth. As encouragement he reminded him that "the successful avowal of mistakes was one of the most important arts in the armoury of the late Prime Minister," he recalled how the withdrawal by Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH of the "infinitely horrible" twopenny tax on cheques had roused the Carlton Club to pæans of praise sustained for weeks, and finally, with mock modesty, he described how he himself had had one of his best days in the Commons by abandoning the tax on kerosene which he had proposed.

The second important fact was that these exhortations were not wasted, for at the end of an admirably-phrased speech, in which he expressed genuine surprise at the opposition which the N.D.C. had aroused, Mr. CHAMBERLAIN admitted that he would be less than prudent not to accept the offer of a larger sum extracted by a simpler method, and that the N.D.C. would therefore be dropped in favour of an alternative tax, to produce £25,000,000 and still based on the profits of industry. (But not on the growth of those profits.)



OUR BACK BENCH *WHO'S WHO*

It 'll
Fill out this portrait of Sir ERNEST GRAHAM-LITTLE
To say that, as an expert on human skin,
He must find Westminster rather thick than thin.

The wisdom and courage of this announcement met with the vociferous approval of all parties, and Mr. ATTLEE tendered his congratulations, a trifle ironically perhaps, to Mr. CHAMBERLAIN for having deferred to the wishes of the Opposition.

Wednesday, June 2nd.—Epsom took its annual and very considerable toll of the Commons. Its toll of the Lords was complete.

The Colonial Office debate was orderly, well-informed and just a little dull. Mr. ORMSBY-GORE announced that he had asked the Governors of Hong-Kong and the Straits Settlements for their views on both the majority and minority reports of the Commission on Mui-Tsai (child-slavery); Mr. LUNN urged the injustice of the taxes on the natives of Kenya; Mr. DE ROTHSCHILD asked that educational advances in our African dependencies should be made a reality and that the rights of natives to engage in industry on equal terms with Europeans should be safeguarded; and Sir EDWARD GRIGG pleaded for more collaboration between the white peoples in Africa.

The Safe

"THE very first thing you must do," said Isabel, "is to put my jewels in the safe. You know that these seaside hotels are always infested with thieves of all shapes and sizes."

So I took the jewels downstairs, together with my own wallet, which for once contained quite a sizeable sum. The manager said that he would be delighted to extend the hospitality of his safe to our property, and after sealing the stuff in two packages and getting me to sign a book and giving me a receipt, he said he'd like me to wait and watch him put it in the safe.

"It's a very good safe," he said, "with three locks. I have one key, my wife the second, and my son the third. We can't afford to take any risks with visitors' property."

Then he sent a porter to find his wife and another porter to find his son.

The wife arrived in about ten minutes, evidently annoyed to be disturbed, and then after another five minutes the son breezed in and the ceremony began. The manager turned his key with a flourish, and then the wife tried to turn her key with a flourish, but it didn't turn. They messed about for a bit, and then remembered that the wife had changed keys with the son some time back and that the wife's key wouldn't turn until the son's key had been turned. It took them about five minutes to get the wife's key out again and straighten it, and then the son found that *his* key had slipped through to the lining of his coat, and we were held up again. At last they got the door open and I saw that the safe was empty.

"Not many of the visitors use it," said the manager regretfully; "I don't know why."

I thought of remarking that it was possibly because they didn't want to spend the whole of their holiday watching the stuff being put in and taken out again, but the manager was pretty irritable already, so I let it pass. He deposited the two packages in lonely splendour on the floor of the safe, and then I waited until they had gone through the key business again, thanked him and departed.

"By the way," said Isabel when I got upstairs again, "you might give me a couple of pounds to be going on with."

And then it dawned on me that I had forgotten to keep back any money at all when I sealed up the wallet. I explained this to Isabel and she said that the only thing would be to go and get the wallet out again.

The manager was still standing at his desk, and I approached him with a weak sort of smile.

"I want something out of my wallet," I said in rather a small voice. "I'm most frightfully sorry to bother your wife and son again, but I foolishly put all my money in that envelope, and——"

"She's gone to wash her hair," he said gloomily, "and she was annoyed enough last time. She'll tear me to pieces if I send for her again, and she won't let the key out of her sight. Says I'm not to be trusted. So I think the best way will be to forget about the keys."

He took hold of one end of the safe and I took hold of the other, and with a bit of an effort we lifted it up and put it down a couple of feet away. The two packages were lying on the floor where the safe had been.

"It's a perfectly good safe," he said defensively, "but it hasn't any bottom. Don't tell my wife I told you."



"DAMN YOU, SIR! THIS ISN'T SCOTLAND YARD."

Overdoing It

"A Keep-fit class has been running for several weeks."—*Institute News in Magazine.*

At the Play

"HE WAS BORN GAY" (QUEEN'S)

Mrs. Georgina Dell is in a constant flutter, dashing in and out of the various rooms in her superior house on the cliffs near Dover in the summer of 1815, and she does well to be upset, for her house is far too small to hold two or three kings of France at the same time, and yet at one moment there are three pretenders at any rate, and one of them genuine, in her drawing-room.

Like that drawing-room, Mr. EMLYN WILLIAMS' play (which was at the Queen's Theatre last week, but has now, not very surprisingly, disappeared), is overcrowded and unequal to its subject. The idea of a long obscure exile begun in early childhood, the contrast between the DAUPHIN'S great birth and his life in exile as a minor music-master, is not developed or heightened by the dramatist. It remains a great idea, and there are moments when Mr. JOHN GIELGUD captures some of its depth. But in the main in this play it is harried and chivvied and overlaid with meretricious decoration.

Mr. WILLIAMS, who in *Night Must Fall* showed such an admirable restraint in his character-drawing, seems nervous because he is dealing with an historical period; all the characters are over-heightened, and the *Dell* family are broad comedy figures, particularly *Prissy Dell* (Miss BETTY JARDINE), the daughter of the house, whose marriage seems to be hanging fire. *Lady Atkyns* (Miss SYDNEY FAIRBROTHER), who forces herself upon the *Dells* as a self-appointed judge of the genuineness of young pretenders to the throne of France, is a further strain on our credulity, and *Mr. Leroy*, the impostor (Mr. FRANK PETTINGELL), is impossible and belongs to burlesque, and the laughter which his ungainly bucolic presence produces is bought at a heavy price. It leaves us doubtful about *Miss Sophy Raffety* (Miss CAROL GOODNER), who has lent herself to this preposterous catch-guinea fraud, but who develops rapidly in intimacy with the real *Dauphin* till we see she has the makings of an able woman behind the Throne.



WHITHER?

Miss Mason . . MISS GWEN FFRANGÇON-DAVIES
Mason . . . . . MR. JOHN GIELGUD
Sophy Raffety . . MISS CAROL GOODNER



RIVAL PRETENDERS

Lambert . . . . . MR. EMLYN WILLIAMS
Mr. Leroy . . . . MR. FRANK PETTINGELL

There are, however, two or three consistent and convincing characters. There is *Miss Mason* (Miss GWEN FFRANGÇON-DAVIES), the tragic sister and the companion through the twenty hidden years of *Louis XVII.*, whose aim is to keep him hidden and safe, and there is the secret agent, *Lambert* (Mr. EMLYN WILLIAMS), whose aim, in the interests of *Louis XVIII.*, is to remove *Louis XVII.* altogether from this earthly scene. It is when Mr. WILLIAMS appears that we understand better how it is that in this play he has not been at home with his theme. He commands humour and he commands to an unusual degree dramatic situations centring in murder. Perhaps no real agent would have left the room with the poison on the table and a third party, *Mr. Lewis Dell*, present, and have gone away content with a psychological conviction that a man of the *Dauphin's* character would in fact drink it. But apart from this everything the secret agent does has admirable purpose, and he brings the play into the sphere of *realpolitik*, of wicked men with clear limited objectives, the kind of subject-matter which Mr. WILLIAMS can handle with particular skill. But the ruthless effectiveness of *Lambert* only throws into relief the divided nature, the indecisions and the morbidity of the unhappy *Dauphin*, whose fate it is to forfeit the sympathy of the audience in the last crisis of his sad life. We are to understand that we are witnessing the enduring marks of his terrible experiences in the Temple, and Mr. GIELGUD very skilfully evokes that past; but when it comes to handing over the sacred and treasured proofs of his great birth to *Mr. Leroy* to enable that vulgar swindler to enjoy a longer run for his money, we are only saved from feeling contempt by regarding the *Dauphin* as slightly deranged.

Along the lines of lasting derangement from great ill-usage in childhood a tragic story might be woven, but not one particularly suited to the stage. But it cannot be done in an atmosphere of broad comedy. The elements do not mix and the result does not satisfy, nor is illusion created. The son of the house, *Lewis Dell, M.P.* (Mr. GLEN BYAM SHAW), who declares himself a Liberal a full twenty years before such

things were known, does not at any point claim or prove to be the *Dauphin*, but there is a moment in the Third Act when nobody would be much surprised if he did. A farce like *Tons of Money* can pile effect on effect and produce three *Georges* at once, but by this cumulative treatment in connection with the *Dauphin* Mr. EMLYN WILLIAMS fatally handicaps both Mr. GIELGUD and the play when the moments come for the disclosure of the inner tragedy. D. W.

At the Revue

"CHARLOT'S NON-STOP NO. 3"
(VAUDEVILLE)

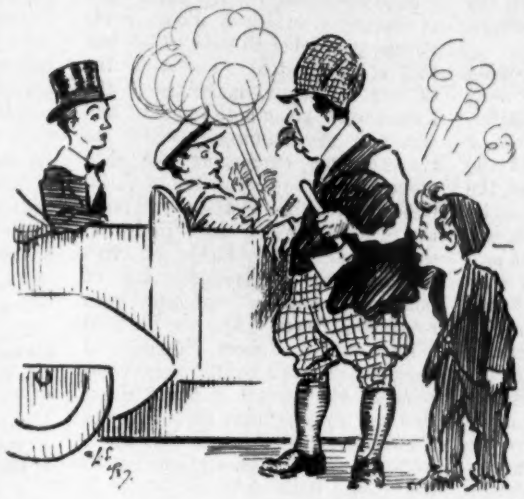
BY merit as well as reputation Mr. HARRY TATE easily heads the bill of this undistinguished revue.

I imagine the British public will always laugh at his "Motoring" sketch, even though the comparative perfection of the modern motor-car has left only an historical flavour to such a monumental breakdown. I still find it funny. Looked at coldly, the whole episode is preposterously thin, but in the hands of Mr. TATE, or rather seen through the moustache of Mr. TATE, a chemical change occurs and it becomes inspired knockabout, to which Mr. RONNIE TATE contributes handsomely in the part of the chauffeur who has won his way to the wheel in spite of a magnificent ignorance of what goes on under the bonnet.

For myself, I view with the most profound regret the evaporation of humour from machinery, which grows duller and duller the more efficient it becomes; and I look back sadly to those unforgettably splendid days when the sanded lanes of England were strewn with purple-faced men blasphemously tinkering with explosive but immobile vehicles. Once the motor-car had begun to trespass on the countryside, and so spoilt it, there was every reason for the invader to give compensation by remaining funny. Since it has failed to do that, we should be doubly grateful to Mr. TATE for stimulating such happy memories.

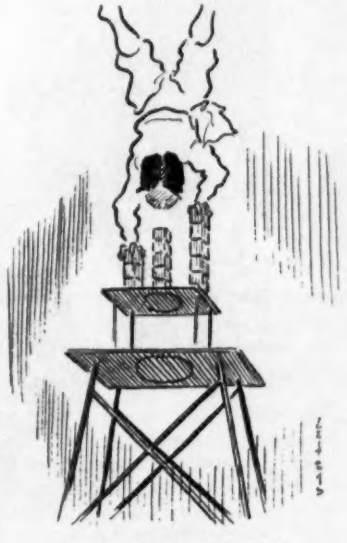
His other sketch, about the office, is not of the same quality, but it has high moments, such as when he walks round his desk to slip a letter into a bottomless drawer, and when the inventor explains to him the complexities of his gigantic mousetrap.

Apart from these the sketches in this programme are so feeble and their humour so tawdry that I am surprised to find Mr. CHARLOT putting his name to it. The only one which is in the slightest



THE TATE GALLERY

His Son	MR. CLIFF GORDON
His Chauffeur	MR. RONNIE TATE
The Motorist	MR. HARRY TATE
The Urchin	MR. HARRY BEASLEY



BUILDING HIMSELF UP
ONE OF THE OHAYO TRIO

degree effective dramatically shows the murder of a prostitute by a man who is living on her earnings, and to say the least of it this theme adds little to the gaiety of the evening.

Some of the tunes have been written by Mr. DENNIS VAN THAL and some by Mr. NAT AYER, Jnr.; the best are attractive without being notably good. Of the singers Miss PATRICIA LEONARD shows most talent; she sang "Souls for Sables" very well, though it is just as silly a song as it sounds.

The odd turns include the OHAYO TRIO of Oriental gymnasts, whose feats of balance I commended here a few months ago; VALENTINE, a quick-sketch artist who does a number of portraits, the cleverest of which parodies the lean features of our new Prime Minister; and Mr. SID PLUMMER, who extracts somewhat obvious humour from a trick-xylophone. The chorus has been selected with care; when it is not indulging in a nudity unusual for London it is quite well dressed.

But I cannot recommend the show, even though it is enriched by Mr. TATE. ERIC.

At the Ballet

"BALLETS DE MONTE-CARLO"
(COLISEUM)

THE centrepiece of the all-FOKINE programme on the opening night at the Coliseum was a work that is new to London, *Les Elfes*, a suite of dances to music by MENDELSSOHN, with *L'Épreuve d'Amour* and *Schéhérazade* in solid baroque support.

Although the new work gave rise to thoughts of how very first-rate a second-rate work can be, these were hastily followed by some sobering reflections upon how very second-rate a first-rate company can become. Last year, led by Mlle. NEMCHINOVA (whose technical precision etches the lines of her work with keen strokes upon the memory) and strengthened by a few appearances of that fine artist, WOIZIKOVSKI, this company earned golden opinions for its excellent ensemble. London had not seen a *corps-de-ballet* that for precise, intelligent and deft co-operation could be held to be its equal. This year, with it shorn of its distinguished guests, the ballet-goer expected to find much the same change that occurred two years ago at Sadler's Wells, when Mlle. MARKOVA left the company. Although the captains and the kings had departed he was perfectly prepared to renew his tumult and his shouting over the many excellences which were about to be revealed and to which formerly the

concentrated limelight, focussed on the stars, had doubtless blinded him. But though the Blum company have been working together for a year and come fresh from the heartening experience of a successful season at Monte Carlo, their work is ragged and dull and the truth—in the form of timing, neatness and accuracy—is not in them.

Les Elfes finds FOKINE in something of the same vein which that most enchanting of all ballets, *Les Sylphides*, discovered. To music taken from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and the Second and Third Movements of the Violin Concerto (admirably played by Mr. BROSA) a revel of elves is convened. The back-cloth suggests the blankness of blue-lit space, and within its span the elves flicker in and out of the mazes of a shimmering dance. As in *Sylphides*, the grouping and the dancing sequences have their roots in the classical school of ballet; but this does not mean that they are dull or dryly academic. The poetry that is the special attribute of FOKINE's choreography touches his material, common to every class-room, with a life and meaning of its own. There is much in the arrangement of the ballet to interest and charm the ballet-goer when the first disappointment over unhelpful costumes and ill-chosen music has worn off.

Like *Sylphides*, *Les Elfes* is a suite of dances in which a mood, made visible, passes before the eyes—a tale that is vividly told. But while the CHOPIN valses and mazurkas of the former work, being both romantic and compact, are admirably suited to choreographic expression, the slow movement of the MENDELSSOHN Violin Concerto calls for a sustained and more complicated working out. Under its slow insistence the flicker of elves solidified into an energetic trio of ballerinas, suitably equipped with rotating partners. Alas for illusion! With a wealth of short, pleasing and imaginative music by the same composer at his disposal, it is surprising that the choreographer did not make a safer choice. He might even have devised some compensating action to the "Songs Without Words."

Mlle. NANA GOLLNER, a young American dancer, who appeared for DANILOVA in *Choreartium* at Covent Garden last year, showed promise of a strong technique and a pleasing spontaneity, and Mlle. NATHALIE LESLIE confirmed last year's impression that she is an artist of quality with a rare feeling for the dance.

In the somewhat lack-lustre performance of *L'Épreuve d'Amour* which preceded the new work, Mlle. RUANOVA and M. EYGLEVSKY were alone in overcoming the feeling of lassitude; and in *Schéhérazade*, which completed the programme, Mlle. LAURET had evidently set out for that great slab of twopence-coloured Samarkand by way of the Rue de la Paix.

Our Versatile Chasers

"Sir,—As the originator of the scheme to increase the Clerk's salary, may I state that Mr. Peat is chasing the wrong man in more ways that one."—*Letter in Derbyshire Paper.*

"Saturday, May 29th, 1937. 5th Month, 31 Days. Whit. Monday."
Advertiser's Tear-off Calendar.

All right—prove it.



"LET 'IM ALONE, ALBERT."
"SHURRUP! I AIN'T TAKIN' NO SAUCE FROM A '32 KID."

The Fly

One of the minor mysteries of angling is the problem of flies. I do not mean the problem of what flies to use—that is one of the major mysteries and remains, so far as most of us are concerned, unsolved; I mean the problem of what happens to the flies we lose. And I claim here and now the gratitude of all anglers, for I have just found the explanation.

It was in a way a kind of apocalypse, the sort of thing one sees only once in a lifetime. I had spent a long day prowling the banks of a stream and had caught nothing (that will show you how truthful I am). Perhaps the weather was too bright; perhaps the water was too low or too clear; but dry-fly and even (spare me, ye real anglers!) worm had alike proved vain. Anyhow, I had caught nothing; so, on the principle that it could at least do no harm, I put on a wet-fly cast—a Butcher, a March Brown and a nameless oddity. Bear with me if I describe it, for it is rather important. Shorn of technical terms, it had a blob of orange in the middle, grey whiskers, tartan wings and the general air of a jenny-long-legs on which someone had dropped a poached egg. A ridiculous fly, you will say; nevertheless on it went.

Thus armed, I flogged the water (a trite phrase, but I fear it describes my style) for another hour, still with no better luck; so I sat down to light a pipe and think on the world in general and fish in particular. I had chosen for my meditations a spot beside a clear deep pool, and, like Sir Bedivere counting the dewy pebbles, I noted without much interest the stones and rocks at the bottom of the pool, when suddenly I saw a Trout. He deserves a capital, for he must have been nearly two feet long, brown, silver and plump, and he lay with his head upstream, motionless save for the occasional undulations of his beautiful tail. Cautiously I slunk back out of his range of vision, picked up my rod, crept forward within reach and, buoyed up by the angler's eternal hope, cast my line, regardless of the manifest absurdity of my tackle, for the madness sent by the gods was on me.

From where I crouched I could just see him, though he, I believe, could not see me; or if he did he thought me an opponent beneath his notice. For once my cast settled on the water without a ripple, and the tail fly—the Butcher—floated down within inches of his nose. He rose, not at it, but near it, then returned to his lair and again lay lethargic in the current. Again I cast in almost the same spot: this time he merely turned his head and nothing more.

I crept nearer and cast again, covering him now with my middle fly, the March Brown. He rose at it, poised himself for a moment and sneered. I give you my word as an angler: he curled up his nose and sneered. As he sank again with a derisive flip of his tail his eye seemed to catch mine with a shocked expression, as who would say, "Really, Sir, really!" And another attempt elicited no movement whatever, unless a twiddle of his tail could be taken to express scorn.

This annoyed me, for I will not be sneered at by any fish smaller than a sturgeon, and, throwing caution to the winds, I stepped forward and cast violently towards him. Over him, I should say, for my style reverted to normal, and my cast uncoiled far out over the water, with even the tartan atrocity a couple of feet beyond him.

Then the miracle happened. He rose at it, swam leisurely round it, eyed it from all sides, and daintily—ever so daintily and gently—took it in his mouth. A jerk, a dash, a whir of the reel, and I actually had him on!

If you are an angler I need not describe the next few seconds; if you have never held a rod, I cannot. There was a short sharp struggle, my rod bending like a reed, for he was very



"I'M GOING ON A CRUISE TOO."

strong, and I began to think I had him, when there was a twitch and a snap and my line went slack. He was off, and he had taken my Tartan Terror with him.

But—and here comes the revelation—he did not, like all other trout that I had ever lost, dash off to nurse his torn nose in seclusion. Ten seconds later I saw him swimming slowly and composedly down-stream. This time he saw me, and with a jerk of his head seemed to indicate his desire that I should follow. And I did.

At the tail of the pool lay a portion of a submerged wooden fence, towards a post of which he made his way. On reaching the post he stopped and nuzzled it, rubbing his nose against it slowly and very gently. This way and that he rubbed, and I realised that he was trying to rid himself of my fly. After minutes of patient attrition he did it; and with a valedictory wave of his tail was off again up-stream.

Now the post stood in comparatively shallow water, so I waded out to it in the rather faint hope of finding my fly somewhere near it. Then I saw what he really had been doing.

On that post, neatly arranged according to colour and size, were two Butchers, a March Brown, a Greenwell's Glory, a Teal and Dun, a Demon, a Cardinal, four others that I did not recognise, a Silver Devon minnow, an artificial sand-eel and my innominate monstrosity.

I left it to him. Tell me, anglers, did I not do right?

Paris Notes

In addition to the Exhibition of 1937 or after, which, some day, I am convinced is going to be worth seeing, I should like to mention one or two attractions that you can be sure of when you go to Paris. One, which must be sought for and which demands an entrance-fee, is a new museum, or new, at any rate, to me; and the other is a pretty sight which, wherever you are, will force itself on your notice free of charge.

When writing a week or so ago about the Paris Exhibition of 1937 or after, I mentioned that the Eiffel Tower was a legacy to the city from the Exhibition of 1889, and the Pont Alexandre III. and the Grand and Petit Palais from that of 1900; and I might have gone on to say that the Trocadéro, which has just been rebuilt and is to remain, was left behind by the Exhibition of 1878. The most recent of the other new Paris museums is, however, that which was erected for the Colonial Exhibition at Vincennes in 1931, and, amid the vast blocks of flats which sprang up after the vestiges of the Annamites and the Moroccans and the rest had been cleared away, exotically stands as a permanent possession.

The Bois de Vincennes is, for most visitors, not very easy of attainment, for they stay in hotels in the neighbourhood of the Champs Elysées and when they think of a Bois think only of the Bois de Boulogne; but, when you get there, the Bois de Vincennes has also its wide tracts of grass and trees and water, and its race-course, where, however, horses do not run beneath resplendent jockeys, but are driven between shafts by aged men perched on two wheels, and must never, never break away from a trot.

Well, if you are interested in the France that is beyond the seas you are bound to go to the Bois de Vincennes, because it is there that the Colonial Museum is found; and even if you are interested in the seas themselves, you must go, because downstairs is an aquarium the tanks of which are filled with marvellously-coloured fish, gayer in their hues than any of the resplendent jockeys of Longchamps, while in their midst is a grotto for crocodiles. I don't say that you ought to spend much time in this grotto, for the temperature is I know not what immense height Réamur, and the odour of crocodiles is a taste that I have personally not acquired; but to go to Paris and, as I have done for far too long, neglect this Colonial Museum and all its trophies of Greater France is a serious mistake. But you will have to pay.



And the pretty free sight? I am thinking of those happy creatures in white or in sailor-suits—little girls in muslin and little boys in sailor-suits—accompanied by proud relations in their best clothes, who on First Communion days lend the streets of Paris so cheerful and unfamiliar an air. For these streets normally are dingy; and ordinary Paris attire is sombre; and no one, even before the Blumiad, ever looked as gay as rumour had it; but these little girls all in white, like smiling ghostesses, and these little boys in sailor-suits, have a freshness which, though it may never come again, is real now.

You might suppose that, the religious ceremony over, there was no need for the little communicants to promenade so much; but you would be wrong, because it is part of the ritual that they show themselves to their friends and receive presents. Somewhere in the recesses of those dazzling bunchy robes which the little girls trip along in and which strike so sweetly and unexpectedly on the eye, is a bag, and of course the sailor-suits of the little boys have pockets; and before evening falls, both bags and pockets will be bulging with ten-franc pieces. One does not have a First Communion every day!

But to peacock it in this innocent way is not all; there are family reunions too, where the communicant is the heroine or hero of the moment. During this last Feast of Pentecost I was in a Paris restaurant where a dinner-party for parents and relations and friends occupied the end of the room; and who should be at the head of the table but a little boy in a sailor-suit! The evening was his; and, although I watched him getting sleepy and sleepier, he bravely did his best to be consequential and important and, in sips, to respond to the toasts. There chanced to be no little girls in white at that gathering, but elsewhere I could see, in the mind's eye, many of them, at other festive boards, prinking, as they were entitled to do and encouraged to do, until midnight put an end to their triumph.

A pretty scene, is it not? E. V. L.

"Have Her Carcase."

"The bride, who was given away by her father (a well-known Birmingham meat distributor), looked really beautiful in a blue ensemble."—*Local Paper.*



"THE WORST SHERRY IN LONDON."

Lament for the Nine Million

(It is announced from Munich that nine million British eels are on their way from Grimsby to be distributed among the rivers of the Reich, "so that they can form a new dish on German menus under the Four-Year Self-Sufficiency Plan.")

NINE million eels have sailed, it seems,
From Grimsby town upon the Humber
To populate the German streams;
Nine million eels—a useful number.

Haply these voyagers suppose
They journey on some joyous outing
To where some eel-sought water flows
Whose deeps they shortly will be snouting.

Foreseeing nothing of their fate
And gleeful as a kindergarten,
Away they sail—to variegate
The Self-Sufficient *Speise-karten.*

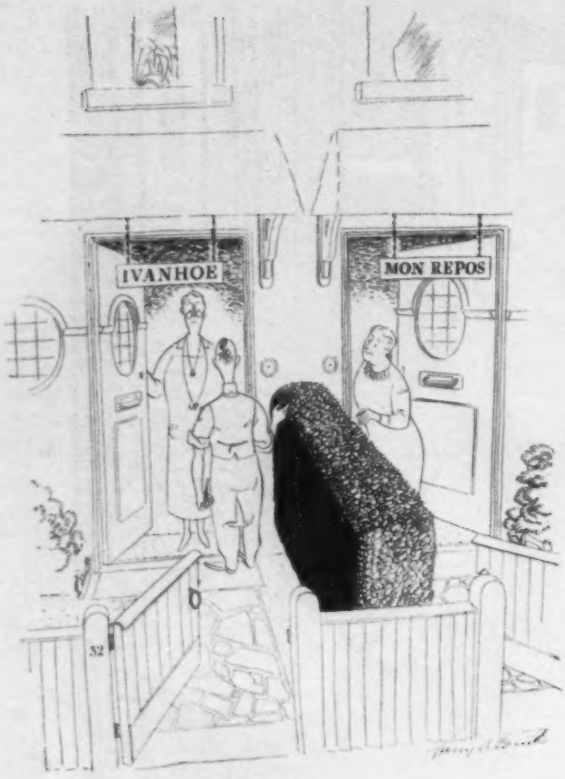
Nine million merry little eels,
Torn from their daddies and their mummies,
Only to end in German creels
And German pots and German tummies.

Myself would gladly let them go
To make good Teutons rounder-bellied
(Eels are the foulest dish I know;
I hate eel-pie, I loathe them jellied).

But some old memory seems to stir
And resurrects from childhood's cloisters
The story of a carpenter,
A walrus and a dozen oysters,

And how that execrated pair
Deceived the unsuspecting shell-fish:
And conscience asks—and has me there—
Are *we* less treacherous and selfish

Who plan a massacre as complete,
A trick as low as theirs was any day,
By launching on this fatal treat
Nine million innocent *Muræniдæ*? H. B.



"MAY WE BORROW YOUR HOE?"

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

At Mrs. Rivington's

"WHO needs to be told what Blackport is?" writes Mr. J. L. HODSON in the opening chapter of *Carnival at Blackport* (GOLLANCZ, 7/6). Certainly no reviewer of ordinary perspicacity need have any doubt on the subject when he learns that this Lancashire seaside resort absorbs on August Bank Holiday a floating population of a quarter-of-a-million who do not belong to her and, further, that she possesses a Great Wheel which (after the fashion of such aids to amusement) sticks fast for several hours at an important stage in the story. Readers who are interested in Lancashire and its remarkable dialect—and they include naturally all born and bred in that delectable county—will welcome Mr. HODSON'S picture of Blackport and its workers, most of whom are active in scheming entertainment for their carnival visitors. His characters are individual and alive, from *Mr. Nathan Levibold*, complete with silk-hat and black-braided coat with astrakhan collar, in whose active brain the carnival idea was born, to *Laura* and *Jake Morrow*, who run a travelling show, and the ingenious *Ted Rivington*, whose wife keeps a boarding-house in which most of the chief characters meet, while she tries in vain to curb his inventive talent. The carnival itself, described with immense gusto, proved to be, all Lancashire declared, a "bobbydazzler," terminating, however, rather unexpectedly on a tragic note.

Keats and the Crowd

"Lord! a man should have the fine point of his soul taken off to become fit for this world." It was KEATS in his early twenties who uttered this damning sentiment, and the chief value of Miss DOROTHY HEWLETT'S *Adonais* (HURST AND BLACKETT, 15/-) is that she copes with KEATS'S fellow-creatures in a fashion never before attempted. You may prefer the grace and suavity of the old Houghton *Life and Letters*, but you cannot afford to overlook a volume which pits the most sensitive of English poets—CHATTERTON perhaps excepted—against his crude, full-blooded Georgian world. The impact is reciprocal, and excellent play is made with the effect of KEATS on his contemporaries: his affectionate unlucky family; his proud possessive friends; the condescending Edinburgh reviewer who spells SPENSER with a 'c'; the *Quarterly's* notorious but not positively lethal bully; the anonymous Devonian admirer who sent twenty-five pounds and a sonnet. Recently-published letters and a sounder attitude of interpretation inspire a reconsidered estimate of FANNY BRAWNE. It is a tribute to KEATS, no less than to his "bright star," that the latter should be seen steadfast and remain undimmed.

Pastorals

Here is a book concerning
  A countryside. It's one
Of trifles, lightly turning
  To studies, lightly done.
It names each rustic neighbour;
It comes from Messrs. FABER;
The work it is (not labour)
  Of FRANKLIN LUSHINGTON.

Where herbage salt and harsh is
  And harsh the salt sea-fogs
We meet on Dymchurch marshes
  With shepherds, sheep and dogs.
Yet gardens here blow brightly,
The coast-wise lights wink nightly,
And there are lots of sprightly
  Domestic duologues.



"YOU'LL BE SURPRISED TO KNOW, SIR, THAT I'M IN LOVE WITH YOUR DAUGHTER—IN FACT I CAN THINK OF NOTHING ELSE."



THE PILLION JOKE (VERY EARLY FORM)



"SIT TIGHT, AUNTIE! THERE'S ANOTHER SHARP TURN COMING!"

F. H. Townsend, Punch, June 10th, 1908.

On lands of hop and glory
And dykes aloud with midge,
When Summer, transitory,
Muffles a shore's blue ridge,
The author's done us well; a
Dear is his fond *Fenella*;
I hope that he will sell a
Full house of *Pennybridge*.

Pillar to Post

The problem of a divorced couple's family—or families—looks likely to be a recurring one; but Mrs. WHARTON's fine novel, *The Children*, still remains the best attempt to portray the worst result of matrimonial instability. *The Grown-Ups* (CHATTO AND WINDUS, 7/6), by CATHARINE WHITCOMB—also American—is a poor second. This depicts seventeen years of the life of *Camilla Madden*, whose mother and father have each three shots at domestic felicity. She is a sensitive and physically queasy little girl, involved in powerful cross-currents of grown-up lust and aversion, and her story opens with the stock quota of two parents, a half-sister and a brother. It ends, after a welter of readjusted relations, in entire detachment from family ties. One is incidentally inclined to wonder what will happen to children like *Camilla* when the generation of accommodating grannies and spinster aunts, so much in evidence here, is not available for the dumping of superfluous young relations. Miss WHITCOMB, however, makes little comment on this or any other aspect of the situation. She contents herself with describing in lavish detail her heroine's physical reactions, with occasional attempts—more ambitious but less convincing—at psychological diagnosis.

Self-Portraits

The latest of the sumptuous books of pictures issued by Messrs. ALLEN AND UNWIN in collaboration with the PHAIDON PRESS of Vienna, at the astonishingly low price of 10/6, is *Five Hundred Self-Portraits*. "From antique

times," as the title-page proceeds, "to the present day, in sculpture, painting, drawing and engraving": the first in the section of 478 large reproductions being of the portrait of PHIDIAS on the shield of Athena Parthenos, and the last that of GIORGIO DE CHIRICO in 1924. Other smaller pictures and sketches are reproduced in the historical introduction by LUDWIG GOLDSCHEIDER, the editor: here you may find THACKERAY, BAUDELAIRE, MARK TWAIN (with difficulty) and GOETHE, as well as—for example—HOGARTH and TURNER, MANET and (a brilliant little pen-caricature) DÉRAIN. There are many different sorts of pleasure to be got from this book. A picture may please æsthetically or because it satisfies curiosity (many of these are from "remote and inaccessible collections"), or because it amuses, or simply because of the excellent reproduction. The only warning necessary is for the reader with a neurosis about portraits the eyes of which look straight into his own.

Men and Women

Those who believe that the proper study of mankind is woman and *vice versa* will enjoy, as its name suggests that they might, *The Happier Eden* (HEINEMANN, 7/6), by Mrs. BEATRICE KEAN SEYMOUR, for most of the people in the book are busy all the time either falling in love or out of it. The plot is among the best known, that of the husband deeply in love with his present wife but fearing himself a bigamist because he has never satisfactorily disposed of the wife before; yet in Mrs. KEAN SEYMOUR'S capable hands, freshened with many individual characters and much interesting family history and with the novelty of a hero whose mother has been his wife's parents' cook, it makes very good reading. Her lively picture of the *Herriards* cleverly portrays a certain section of the upper-middle-class world of to-day, and *Rome*, her heroine, though not very vividly sketched in, wins the reader's sympathy, as she should. It is a pity that mislaid first wives have to be so monotonously exotic, though few can have been quite so much so as this one, who was "Basque and English on her parents' side and on that of her grandparents Spanish and French."

Podbury Agog

Many major spires, differing in design but similar in their effect on the life of the communities below them, could be fitted on to the Podbury of Miss MARY MITCHELL'S *Decline and Fall of a British Matron* (HEINEMANN, 7/6). The cathedral city, moated stoutly with conservatism, still offers the satirically-minded novelist of manners drawing-rooms whose occupants are socially graded by their fellows with almost mechanical precision and a background excellently canalised for the discreet and orderly dissemination of gossip. But it is becoming rather old game. This story tells how the *Bishop's* sister, a proud and ambitious woman, dominated her pretty nitwit of a daughter; how she met her match in a young squire who, enough infatuated to wish to be her son-in-law, proved as unscrupulous as herself; and how her daughter's inevitable rebellion took the course of an adventurous retreat to the Continent. The latter part of the book is the more interesting, for these Palace manœuvres pall under a detailed examination. Miss MITCHELL writes with shrewdness and a certain dramatic skill, but her style is disappointingly uneven.



"AND IF IT HADN'T BEEN THAT I HAD ANOTHER ROUND I MIGHT BE STANDING THERE."

The Raiders

On the wrapper of *Naked Gold* (7/6) we are reminded by Messrs. CONSTABLE that during the War a cargo-boat, the *Cristobal*, left America laden with huge sums of money which were to be transferred to a U-boat ready and waiting off the Canaries. The *Cristobal*, however, had to put in to Guayaquil, and at this point Mr. A. T'SERSTEVENS takes charge of her and relates a story of adventure which does credit to his powers of imagination and invention. In Guayaquil were *La Rubia*, a supreme courtesan, and *Romero Tovar*, hard-boiled chief of the harbour police; and this redoubtable couple, with the connivance of the second officer, decided to seize the *Cristobal*. Promptly *Tovar* enlisted a gang of the toughest toughs, and the boat and her gold passed into their hands. With *La Rubia* on board, the *Cristobal* sailed for an "unknown destination." Mr. T'SERSTEVENS obviously set out to draw a man and woman obsessed by lust and love of gold, and it is possible that they may be too voluptuous for all tastes. But as a tale of stark adventure the book's merits cannot be denied.

Mr. Punch on Tour

THE Exhibition of the original work of Living "Punch" Artists will be on view at the Grundy Art Gallery, Blackpool, from June 12th to July 31st.

Invitations to visit this Exhibition will be gladly sent to readers if they apply to the Secretary, "Punch" Office, Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.

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Charivaria

ATTENTION has been called to the lack of cupboards in the average house. This is probably because most of them get converted into flats.

* * *

A *Daily Telegraph* correspondent suggests that publishers should issue at least one volume of worthwhile modern poetry per annum. He makes no suggestion, however, as to where they are to find it.

* * *

A golf historian recalls that BONNIE PRINCE CHARLIE was an exponent of the game. He went out in '45, we understand.

* * *

A new type of cocktail-glass has a square base. Its great advantage is that it doesn't leave rings on polished tables.

* * *

"The noise made by a ping-pong ball is really *pang-pung*," says a correspondent. We shall continue to call the game table tennis.

* * *



Foolproof deck-chairs that cannot collapse are now being used at many seaside resorts. It was thought, no doubt, that visitors were getting too much amusement for twopence.

* * *

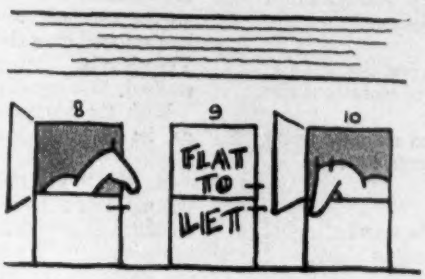
According to current reports convicts are to be allowed two shillings pocket-money per week. We understand, however, that there is little hope of the scheme being extended to tax-payers.

* * *

A prominent dance-band conductor has written a song about sun-bathers. An appropriate title would be "John's Brown Body."

* * *

New potatoes, we read, are plentiful this year but they lack size. Well, we must be thankful for small murphies.



A police-constable who entered an old shed out of idle curiosity was surprised to find two men inside making counterfeit coins. Whereupon, no doubt, he proceeded to make notes.

* * *

The Canadian Quintuplets recently sang to the world on the radio, but the words were not distinguishable. They should have a bright future in musical-comedy.

* * *

An irate mother informs us that a burglar broke into the bedroom where two of her children were lying ill with chicken-pox. He will no doubt break out later.

* * *



"A Giant of British Railways is to Leave the Southern," says an *Evening News* headline. But not, we fear, the one who forces his way into our already overcrowded carriage each morning.

* * *

ISAAC D. FEDOTOV, a Russian, who started work at the age of eight and has now been made to retire at the age of a hundred-and-twenty-four, is said to be annoyed. It seems he understood the job was to be a permanent one.

* * *

A Paris waiter is suing a firm for damages because he found a piece of rubber tyre in a pork-pie. The motor-car seems to be taking the place of the horse everywhere.

* * *



Considerable surprise was caused on a South Coast links when a lady-golfer clad only in a bathing-costume returned a score of exactly seventy. She couldn't have gone round in much less.

* * *

Compared with other parts, it is said, Mexico is now so quiet that you could almost hear a gun go off.

"To Gild Refined Gold . . ."

THE village stream that from the moorland flows
Glides on and chatters, chatters as it goes,
Nor wide is it nor deep;
The moving waters at their priestlike task
Stir the stout staves of many a Watney's cask
But cannot break their sleep.

A sunny pool beside the reed-bed lies
Where boots and bowler-hats of monstrous size
The sleepy regions share;
And glimmering fish and proud majestic swans
Float all day long among the petrol-cans
And broken china-ware.

Earth hath not anything to show more bright!
The happy children each returning night
Stop here (or gently pass),
Then hurry homeward with reluctant feet,
Leaving behind the crusts they cannot eat
Star-scattered on the grass.

How sweet the sunlight sleeps upon yon pail
Shining in beauty where the long weeds trail
O'er battered can and tin,
Where day by day, as evening shadows grew,
The rude forefathers of the hamlet threw
The hamlet's refuse in!

Fresh joys return with each returning year;
Soon will the high midsummer pomps be here,
The tripping times, when we
Shall fling fresh offerings on the general store,
Making still fairer what was fair before.
The best is yet to be!

Clearing up the Danube

THERE has been a lot of diplomatic activity in Central Europe and the Balkans recently, and once again people are asking me, What exactly *is* the situation down there?

It's a most extraordinary thing, the state of confusion and, one might almost say, intellectual panic into which educated men and women are thrown by the mere mention of this particular part of the world. Over and over again I have emphasised the essential simplicity of Balkan politics, but I might as well have been talking to a crowd of Tibetans for all the good it seems to have done. The idea that there is something complicated about the whole business is apparently too deeply rooted to be eradicated by anything less fundamental than another war. However, with inexhaustible patience I will try once more to put the position in all its crystal clarity before the public mind.

In the first place it must be remembered that the Little Entente, consisting of Czecho-Slovakia, Rumania and Yugo-Slavia, is the special protégé of France, by whom it has long been regarded as a bulwark against possible German schemes of expansion to the south-east. Czecho-Slovakia (capital, Prague) is also, through racial affinities, closely connected with Moscow—apart from a minority which looks to Berlin for guidance—and Rumania (pop. 18 millions) has an alliance with Poland, whose understanding with Germany in no way affects her rapprochement with France. The position becomes quite clear when the recent agreement between Italy and Yugo-Slavia (President, Dr. STOYADINOVITCH) is recalled.

In estimating the political repercussions of this pact the adherence of Yugo-Slavia to the Balkan Entente, as well as to the Little Entente, should not be forgotten. Bulgaria (cap. Sofia) and Hungary (Prime Minister, Dr. GÖMBÖS), the other two members of the Balkan Entente, are the so-called "revisionist" Powers, the latter in particular exercised over the treatment of Hungarian minorities in Yugo-Slavia. Thus the key to the situation lies, it will be realised, in Yugo-Slavia (pop. Serbs and Croats).

With the background of the scene thus clearly before us, let us see what is actually going on in the arena itself.

M. MOSCICKI, the popular President of Poland, and Colonel BECK have been to Bucharest, the capital of Rumania (King, CAROL). What for? To interest Rumania in their scheme for a chain of neutral states running from the Baltic to the Black Sea. This "lends piquancy," to borrow a useful phrase from *The Daily Telegraph*, to the visit of M. HODZA of Czecho-Slovakia to the same city. He doesn't like the way things are shaping. "Remember," he says to whoever has had the audacity to step into M. TITULESCU'S shoes—"remember the Little Entente." And Rumania, ally of Poland, protégé of France and rapidly going Nazi, makes a diplomatic reply.

At this point the sinister figure of Dr. RUSHDI ARAS, Foreign Minister of Turkey, forces itself on our notice. He too has been in Bucharest for a friendly chat on his way to Moscow. For a moment perhaps the appearance of Turkey (chief exports: opium and mohair) in the Balkan arena tends to cloud the issue. But a little reflection will show us that Turkey, the friend of Russia, is naturally anxious to persuade Rumania to keep open her gates to Russia, whose championship of Czecho-Slovakia, the ally of France, would, in the event of war with Germany, be immunised by the interposition of a Polish-Rumania neutrality *bloc*. I mean, the Russians wouldn't be able to get through. Whether the immediate identity of aims of M. HODZA and Dr. RUSHDI ARAS will lead to a Turkish-Czecho-Slovakian *détente* it is impossible at the moment to say.

Meanwhile, what is the attitude of Yugo-Slavia towards the Bucharest conversations?

Before answering this question it will be as well to consider the implications of Baron VON NEURATH'S visits to Belgrade, Sofia and Budapest. That Yugo-Slavia (cap. Belgrade), at present only in the French camp (Little Entente), the Italian camp (Italo-Yugo-Slav Pact) and the neutral pro-Polish pseudo-Russian with Turkish influences camp (Balkan Entente), should wish to clarify her status by an understanding with Germany is simply commonsense. No one with the slightest knowledge of diplomatic procedure will be surprised at that. But what of Bulgaria and Hungary? Can it be that Germany is attempting to bring the whole Balkan combine under the direct inspiration of Berlin? It may be so. But, as has been well said by *The Times*, "it is a bad habit to fasten sinister or viewy interpretations upon activities which have much else to explain them." These are brave words, and we shall be wise to take heed of their warning.

What then are the possibilities for the immediate future of Central and South-Eastern European diplomacy? Roughly speaking, these:—

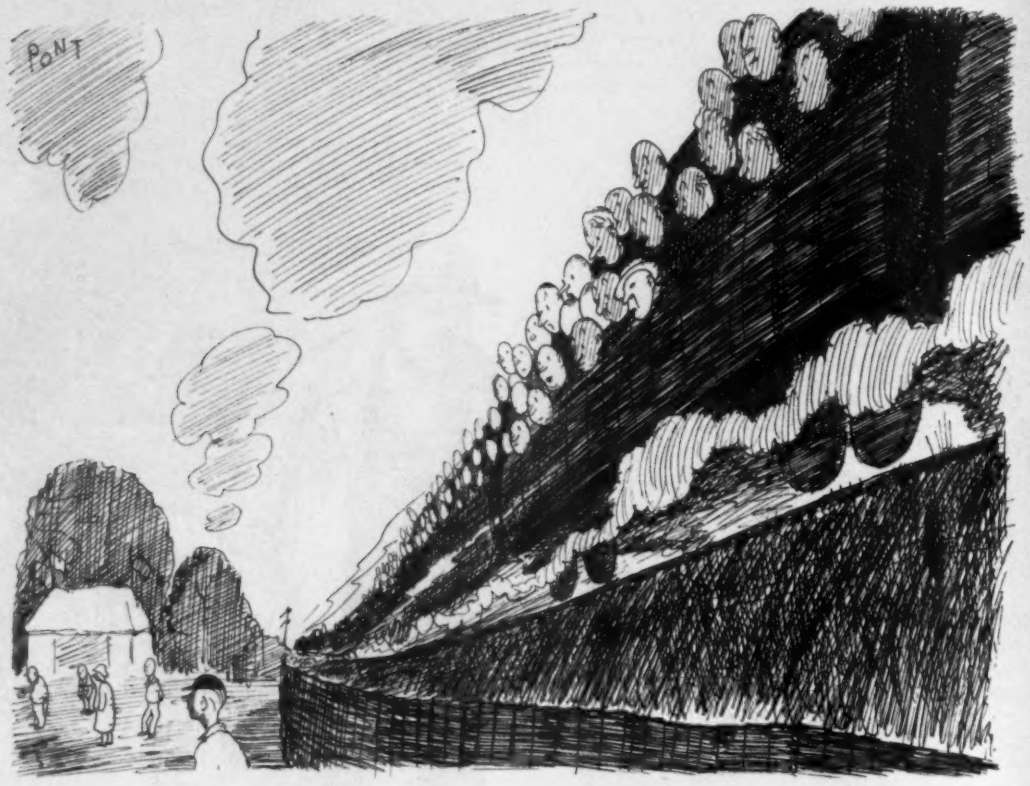
If M. HODZA goes to Belgrade, King CAROL to Sofia, Admiral HORTHY to Prague and Dr. STOYADINOVITCH to Budapest, BORIS of Bulgaria will be practically compelled



THE BRIDGE-BUILDER

GILES. "BIT RICKETY LOIKE, BAIN'T IT, ZUR?"

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE. "DON'T YOU WORRY; WE 'RE GETTING YOU ACROSS GRADUALLY."



THE BRITISH CHARACTER

FONDNESS FOR CRICKET

to go to Bucharest, the only remaining capital. This move would be viewed with grave suspicion by Poland.

Turkey may force Yugo-Slavia into the arms of Russia.

A military alliance between Great Britain on the one hand and Czecho-Slovakia, Bulgaria, Hungary, Rumania and Yugo-Slavia on the other, would lead to marked activity in Rome and might twist the Rome-Berlin axis in the direction of Moscow, thus taking it outside the sphere of practical politics. But it is purely mischievous to suggest that any such alliance is in contemplation.

There are practically no Lithuanians in Bulgaria. Hence the unlikelihood of a Kovno-Bucharest axis.

Well, there in outline is the situation. I have forgotten Austria (monetary unit: Schillings), but it fits quite easily into the general scheme. I only hope that it will not be necessary for me to refer again to the so-called problem of the Danubian states.

H. F. E.

Verbatim

"WHAT does it mean when it says *verbatim*?" Laura inquired.

"It means that whoever reported the speech or whatever it is, was a properly-trained secretary and wrote it all down word for word," I replied pointedly.

"Really! Perhaps they hadn't been asked to take the dog up to the village to buy stamps, and to find out why we haven't had any asparagus for a week, and whether it wouldn't be more fun to go and see the Coronation film than to struggle with those beastly letters."

I admitted that perhaps they hadn't.

"Though actually, Laura, I do think you ought to try to be a bit more *verbatim*, especially about letters, than you are."

"Why?" said Laura indignantly. "I always get at what you mean, more or less. I suppose you're thinking about the day I wrote and told Aunt Emma that you hadn't had time to answer her letter because life was real, life was earnest, and I didn't know it was inverted commas."

"Neither did Aunt Emma. She was frightfully surprised and thought I'd gone mad."

"I can't imagine why. There have been heaps of other times when she might have thought it with at least *some* sort of reason."

I failed entirely to see what Laura meant by this, and a good deal of time was spent in discussing it, but even then I still failed to see what she meant. It wasn't till Charles had come into the room, looked at the clock and walked out again without uttering in the extraordinary way that men do, that one realised how time was passing.

I said—rather wittily, "Life is real, life is earnest, in inverted commas, and I really do think we'd better get on with those letters."

"*Verbatim*," said Laura smartly. "Oh, dear, there isn't a single pencil with a point in this house, I don't believe."

Later in the day my secretary brought me my letters for signature. The procedure would have been even better if she hadn't sat on the edge of the desk, smoking a cigarette and looking over my shoulder as I read them through:—

"DEAR MADAM,—Maud Jones was with me as temporary cook for three months and even that was a record you might add because most of them clear out and say it 's too quiet at the end of a week. I found her honest, sober and clean—not that I ever know, really—and she is a fairly good plain cook. Isn't it awful?—one hates to say that her soup was always greasy and her puddings vile and yet that 's what it boils down to. She was not always punctual. That 's literally true, anyway. She got on reasonably well with her fellow-servants. I 'm not counting Mrs. Flapp, because Mrs. Flapp is a pig and would quarrel with an archangel.

Maud Jones came to me with good references. I suppose she did or I wouldn't have taken her on unless I was absolutely desperate, and I don't *think* I was. Not then. I shall be pleased to give you any further information should you wish it. You won't like it if I do because honestly I've said the absolute utmost that I can, for the wretched girl. She wasn't bad in her way, only she just couldn't cook.

Yours truly . . ."

"MY DEAR MRS. BATTLEGATE,—If that was the telephone again I really am definitely out and shan't be in till midnight at the very earliest. Wrong number again? I think we ought to complain. My dear Mrs. Battlegate. We should like it so much if you and the General would come over for tennis and tea at about four o'clock on Wednesday, and of course do bring anybody who may be staying with you. I suppose I can't say except of course those frightful nieces with the teeth? No, I suppose not. What do you bet it *will* be them? Nobody ever has any nephews, have they? Only nieces. Odd. Who may be staying with you. Better end up with something sprightly about hoping the weather will have improved by then—only not an exclamation mark, which I always think is rather cheap and idiotic.

Yours sincerely or am I very? Very, I think. . . ."

"DEAR SIRS,—I am in receipt of your communication regarding income-tax. And I'm certainly not going to say 'for which I thank you,' which would be the most *utter* mockery. I am forwarding the amount due in the course of a day or two—do you know we forgot to water those dahlias and they 're practically dead. Remind me to do it this evening, will you? Where was I? Oh, *those* foul fiends. In the course of a day or two. After which I, and my husband, and my children and our dog and our cat will all retire to the workhouse together and calling it the Poor Law Institution in that affected way won't make it any better, either. Is that the lot, because if so let 's ask for milk and biscuits."

"Laura," I said, "is that *really* the way I dictate my letters to you?"

"No," said Laura, "it isn't. I left out all the really irrelevant bits." E. M. D.

"I'm a Lucky Chap"

I MET a man
From Yucatan
Home for the Coronation,
Who's shown me how
To make a thou
Apart from speculation.
He 's found untold
Reserves of gold—
I don't know where precisely:
While I invest
He does the rest;
That ought to do me nicely.



"I WON'T HALF KEEP *HIM* WAITING THE NEXT TIME HE 'S LATE."

At the Tattoo

Rushmoor-on-Douro



IT'S ALL VERY WELL TO TALK ABOUT "THE TERRIFIC PACE OF MODERN WARFARE," BUT IT CUTS BOTH WAYS. THIS IS NO REFLECTION ON THIS SOLDIER'S COURAGE BUT A TRIBUTE TO HIS "TERRIFIC PACE."

ONE of the nice things about the Aldershot Tattoo, and there are many, is the way in which its scenery telescopes conventional geography and forces the neighbourly virtues on little bits of the world which have been, and probably remain, quite unconscious of each other's existence.

Any corner where British Forces have been engaged—and taking a medium view of history or even a shorter one of the nearest senior officer's chest, how many corners, projected by MERCATOR or anyone else, have escaped?—is fair game to the Producer, who has to arrange at least two permanent sets as background at the far side of the arena, and marry them as best he can. Raglan may have to look down not on the Usk but Suvla Bay, and Sebastopol command the field of Malplaquet; and no one will deny that this contingency is a step forward in the education of these places.

This year, in its chief item, the Tattoo has taken a distinct list to port. The Douro, serene in the knowledge that it is watering some of the most historic vineyards in Hampshire, flows very bluely over



SPEAKING OF "TERRIFIC PACE," A SMART MUSKETEER COULD GET OFF NO LESS THAN SEVENTEEN ROUNDS IN TWO HOURS.

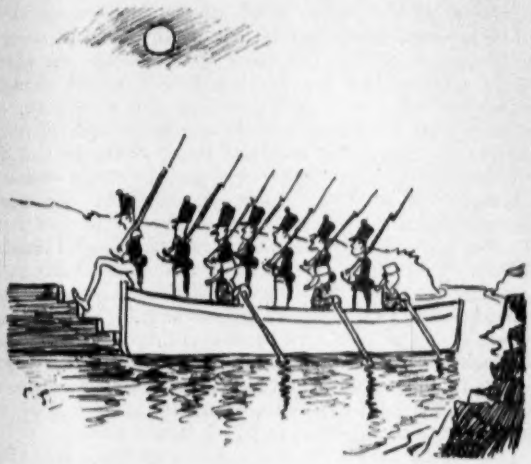
on the left, to provide the scene for WELLESLEY's first victory in the Peninsula, while Old London, admirably staged on the right, keeps the river company under the hospitable pretence that it is its own.

In 1809 war had still something of humour left to it. The French, their viticultural perspicacity undimmed by the hardships of the campaign, had assembled in Oporto, and WELLESLEY, who had marched rapidly north from Lisbon, saw in a disused school on the other side of the Douro a chance for a surprise attack. Perhaps it was hardly cricket to catch out SOULT and his men just as they had got amongst the vintage stuff, but we will let that pass, remembering that the playing-fields of Eton at that date had still to languish in comparative obscurity for another six years.

When the British arrived tip-toe on the near bank, flat-bottomed boats were waiting for them which some lynx-eyed scrounger had unearthed, presumably in the boat-house of the school's rowing-club. They were very far from racing-shells, but they possessed the great advantage (at any rate for Tattoo purposes)

of yielding gracefully to the efforts of a crew of only three, all rowing on stroke side; and long before anyone had pulled the alarm-signal in the French van WELLESLEY and his troops had crossed and the trick was as good as done.

The crossing was effected with all the stateliness and composure of which military men were such masters before the lure of speed removed the dignity from war as from everything else. I do not believe that the Producer has



WHAT WELLESLEY NEVER THOUGHT OF.

PRIVATE LANDING-STAGE FOR TROOPS CROSSING THE DOURO.

exaggerated the orderly pageantry of the scene at all. These men might have been going down the Thames to mount guard over the Whitebait Festival at Greenwich instead of into action. A fine spectacle, of which the most has been made. The theatrical mechanics of the ferrying are an excellent job; even through glasses the Douro has reality.

Old London is the background for this year's most amusing item, the pike and musket exercises which are carried out by troops wearing the delightful uniforms of the seventeenth century. The public will love it, and not only because of a certain faint indelicacy inherent in the words of command. Leisurely movement was apparently the essence of the musketeer's routine. It took him about five minutes to load and fire his weapon, and though this time could undoubtedly have been improved upon if someone like STRAFFORD had blue-pencilled the Manual, there was no need to bother so long as the enemy stuck to the rules, which in those days enemies most religiously did. Both sides faced one another and fumbled in a gentlemanly way while their officers chanted lengthy exhortations containing such charming lines as "Musketeers, blow off your loose corns!" and "Musketeers, have a care to perform your Lacedæmonian retreat!" It was all extremely entertaining, and I would gladly live on bread-and-water for a week if I could hear a Guards C.S.M. relinquish his habit of barking like a sheep-dog in order to address his comrades in this elegant and humane manner.

During the exit of this item we were shown the ritual of "Lodging the Colour," in which the Colour was left hanging out of the window of the Ensign of the day so as to provide a rallying-point for the regiment. At the finish the musketeers discharged their weapons in a ceremonial volley, a very prudent precaution in the absence of safety-catches.

After these I liked best the Physical Training Display. Its large scale and its perfect timing always make it exceedingly effective, and doubly so since no commands are given. This year it falls into two halves, mounted and dismounted; the second is the better, because the dodge of slinging fairy-lights round the horses' heads gives a suggestion of the circus which seemed to me out of place.

But there are plenty of other good turns. There is an all-mechanised action which should give those to think who protest that the internal combustion engine has been anything but an unmitigated curse to mankind. Modern tanks and tractors have an awful ruthlessness of their own, and their crews appear so very small and impotent.

There is also a generous display of fireworks which will please everybody; a parade of massed bands, bigger than ever and enormously impressive both to ear and eye; the usual ingenious evolutions with coloured lights, giving the impression of huge luminous snakes; and by no means least, a Highland display in which the 2nd Battalion of the Seaforth Highlanders show how, in 1778, the Earl of Seaforth sent torchmen out through his lands to raise the regiment. A physical incapacity to do other than shudder at the



THE GRAND FINALE OF THE FUTURE (UNLESS SOMETHING IS DONE ABOUT IT).

(The Commander-in-Chief's complaint is that too many spectators are turning up and too few recruits.)

bagpipes (about which I have never reined my pen) does not blind me to the fact that the Highlanders provide the best individual piece of décor in the whole Tattoo.

As a massed spectacle the Grand Finale is, as always, magnificent. This immense parade of many colours, brilliantly lit, looks from above like the toy-cupboard of a very rich child turned out on to a large green table-cloth. I think it would be better still if it consisted simply of troops, with no property lions or whatnots; but I suppose that this year the four tall beacons must be accepted as delicate compliments to the new Secretary of State.

ERIC.



"Anyone we know been born, dear?"

Doggerel's Dictionary

VI.

Function.—In my remarks under Bran-Tub I said I had nothing much against unnecessary functions in general, but in the interval between that entry and this my prejudices have not been idle, and now I think differently. Unnecessary functions, I am now convinced, are what this great country is suffering from to-day (over and above the verse of ——). I include the more exasperating functions of *x* and *y*, though I am happy to say these have not bothered me for many years. The secret is to behave as if they aren't there. I'm good at this: it's just a knack.

Furniture.—There is a lot more about than circumstances call for. When I was living as described below under Gazebo I managed with very little, and that not mine. I broke most of it too, throwing it at visitors and cats. It was rustic furniture, years old—there was a tradition that the third earl had run it up himself in the Augustan era—and populous with many different kinds of insects; we had many a happy hour together, and many more, happier, apart. However, one doesn't usually find a lot of insects in one's furniture, except after inviting them to come, and I suppose they must not be regarded as a normal ingredient. They make it more interesting, though; give each piece an individuality it would not otherwise have possessed. Uncertainty about which chair is going to fall to bits next is also very useful at a party. It checks any tendency towards rigid grouping by keeping the guests on the move, and it checks any tendency to stay too long—or, often, to come at all.

Future.—I had one in 1927, or so at least I was told by the reviewers of my first book. "Has a great future in store," one of them said of me after quoting with three mistakes the epigraph (by Beddoes) to one of my narrative verses. I did nothing about this at the time because I was busy not letting my right hand know what my left was doing (they were opponents at chess); and even to-day, when one can hardly hear oneself think for the constant crackle of brilliant young authors getting their futures out of store before the collapse of civilisation, I just don't bother.

In a particularly dry and austere phase I went through once I had thoughts of gambling on the Stock Exchange in desiccated coconut futures. The idea had a certain stern grandeur. But I ran into a lyrical phase again almost at once, before I even had time to find out what it is about desiccated coconut that gets it a line to itself in the Market Report.

This about sums up my dealings with futures.

Gazebo.—For seven months once I lived in a gazebo. It was in the fastnesses of a peer's estate, and I may say he knew nothing about it, even though I had letters sent to me there. I got round one of the maids, and her brother was the local postman. They both seemed to think a lot of me, I can't imagine why. Emmie—that was her name, Emmie—wanted me to write about her, recognisably, under her own name, and I told her there didn't seem to be a place for her in the book I was doing—she wasn't exotic enough; but her brother had a smart thought. "Spell her name with a Y and say she's German," he suggested. So I did that, and she ran away with the novel. She ran away with the peer too, later, when she had discovered from the novel the sort of girl she really was.

Genius.—In my time I have met a number of geniuses: they are commoner than most people think. My late friend Gin Fizz was a genius in his way, I'm sure, though I couldn't tell you what at. Perhaps just a genius, without any style-cramping direction. All things considered it probably took genius just to remain alive as long as he did. When I think of the amount he drank, his habit of riding on and falling off the backs of cabs, and the questions he used to ask, as well as that habit people had of dropping all sorts of objects on him out of windows, I am continually staggered by the magnitude of the age (39) to which he did live.

I once knew a man who was a genius at filling jugs. This is a job that cannot be made spectacular, a fact which embittered him; but he was a born jug-filler. When he had filled every jug in his house he couldn't bear to see them emptied, but would go out and hang round teashops and bars, looking sorrowfully and sometimes shuddering at what he called badly-filled jugs. He led a monotonous life, poor chap. The only thing he really seemed to enjoy eating, even, was hare cooked you know how.

H.—This is a letter people make a tremendous fuss about one way and another. I refer chiefly not to the dropping of it from the beginning of a word or a syllable (although I have long wanted to tell Americans how to perform this feat properly. They haven't grasped the principle. They pronounce the Cockney word "No'ow," for instance, not as the Cockney does—*i.e.*, "No-wow," rapidly—but carefully as "No Ow," as if remarking on the absence of Ows



"I warned you exploring was no picnic."



"RATHER QUEER THAT WE SHOULD HAVE HALVED THAT HOLE, CADDIE?"
"QUEER? IT WAS A RUDDY COINCIDENCE!"

about the place), but to the dropping of it when it's *second*. All I want to ask people who say you must pronounce it because it's *there* in when, where, why, and which, is this: How do you pronounce it in Rhodes, rhodomontade and rhododendron?

I asked this of a tenor of my acquaintance once, and he told me, proceeding at the top of his voice: "Ghive t-ho mhe thhe lhife Hi lhove." One good turn deserves another, so I gave it him, and oddly enough the lave, or lhave, went by or bhy him just about the same time; I let it. So runs the world away. R. M.

The Bard Shakes a Shoe

"WHAT measure is this?" said Frances;
"Wild creature, what steps are these?
My strength is spent and my garments rent,
There are bruises on both my knees."
"'Tis the dance," said I, "that is danced by Apollo
When green on the willow the young shoots burst,
And the nymphs are drawn from the glen's dark hollow
And drunk with frenzy the Muses follow—
It's difficult just at first."

"What measure is this?" said Frances;
"What dance is it now you tread?
I have seen strange fire in the eyes of the Squire,
The Vicar has cut me dead."
"'Tis the dance," said I, "that is danced by the Graces
To the loud North Wind's imperious tune
As they weave their rout in the pleasant places,
And Spring undying is in their faces—
You should get into it soon."

"What measure is this?" said Frances;
"Who dances it where, and why?
The mute pairs stand in amaze and the band
Have laid their minstrelsy by."
"'Tis the dance," said I, "that the Cyclops dances
When the night lies soft on Sicilian seas
And light on the water the moonbeam prances——"
"And the milk-white nymph Galatea," said Frances,
"Looks once at him thus—and flees."

In a Good Cause

FOUNDED by QUEEN VICTORIA on June 20th, 1887, the Queen's Institute of District Nursing is about to celebrate its Jubilee. This great national health service, which deals daily with more than 50,000 cases throughout the country, is still not yet complete; it could employ 1,600 more nurses; and Mr. Punch's readers may like to help its extension by contributing to its funds. Donations should be sent to the Queen's Institute of District Nursing, 57, Lower Belgrave Street, London, S.W.1.

At the Pictures

Claudette and Akim

It was the name of Claudette Colbert which decided me to give the film, *I Met Him in Paris*, preference over certain others—and that of course is exactly what its promoters intended. But I must frankly say that I was disappointed. This is not my Claudette. For the moment only, I hope; but this lady, with too much hair battened down on her brow and too few hints of the old grace, and too little of the caressing voice, is not my Claudette.

I suspect the film of having been hastily thrown together for the various purposes of (1) employing Claudette Colbert, Robert Young and Melvyn Douglas while they were waiting for something better to be ready; (2) making use of some winter-sport shots that happened to be on hand; and (3) taking advantage of the ability of Claudette Colbert and Melvyn Douglas on the ice—and they can assuredly skate with charm. To add, then, to this mixture a title with the magic word "Paris" in it, was all, I suppose, that was felt necessary for success.

But films need more care than that, and this one fails because there is nothing but allegation. We can see at a glance that Claudette never goes to Paris at all, and we are more than doubtful if an engaged saleswoman in an American store, such as she purports to be, would ever have gone there alone for a three weeks' holiday. At least, if we were her *fiancé* we should prevent it. But she never goes to Paris; she never goes beyond the Hollywood studio.

This is indeed the first film I can remember with the magic word "Paris" in the title—known to be so alluring to American audiences—that is without one single authentic spot of the Gay City in it.

Apart altogether from the privation of the true Parisian atmosphere (although, of course, being British, I should have been tempted with promises of Vienna!), I found this film an innutritious affair, with nothing but the quiet steady efficiency of Melvyn Douglas, as *George Potter*, to pull it together. Yet no amount of frustration will prevent me from hurrying to the cinema the next time Claudette Colbert is announced. Such is my loyalty.

Film fashions change. I remember, a few years ago, an English playwright who had been working in Hollywood telling me how one of his scenes was scrapped because the heroine addressed



EXIT THE VILLAIN

Steve Kalkas . . . Akim Tamiroff

to a pet-dog a few words essential to the story. Soliloquies not being permitted, this next thing to one of them seemed to the dramatist, and to me, a



LIPSTICK!

George Potter . . . . . Melvyn Douglas
Gene Anders . . . . . Robert Young
Kay Denham . . . . . Claudette Colbert

legitimate device. But no, the director would not have it. "No talking to dogs in this stoodio," he said, and something clumsier had to be thought up. But in *King of Gamblers* a singing bird in a cage is twice the recipient of confidences.

On the tough side this film is excellent entertainment, enfranchising that new force, Akim Tamiroff, a short swarthy gentleman with broken English, a charming smile (when he likes), and (when he likes) a terrifying glare, who, in the present picture, plays the part of *Steve Kalkas*, the sinister owner of a block of flats, various night-joints and thousands of illicit slot-machines, and who, I take it, is destined always to be seen in similar parts, with a nice girl trying to turn him down and the police and the D.A., or District Attorney, after him. I personally hope so, for I was getting too intimate with the old crooks. An unfamiliar face, and eminently so when it is as dark and forbidding as Akim Tamiroff's, is welcome.

As *Steve Kalkas* he stops at nothing, until, at the right moment, after one of the best scraps I have ever seen, he falls down the shaft of his own private elevator—the second person in the film to be killed in this way.

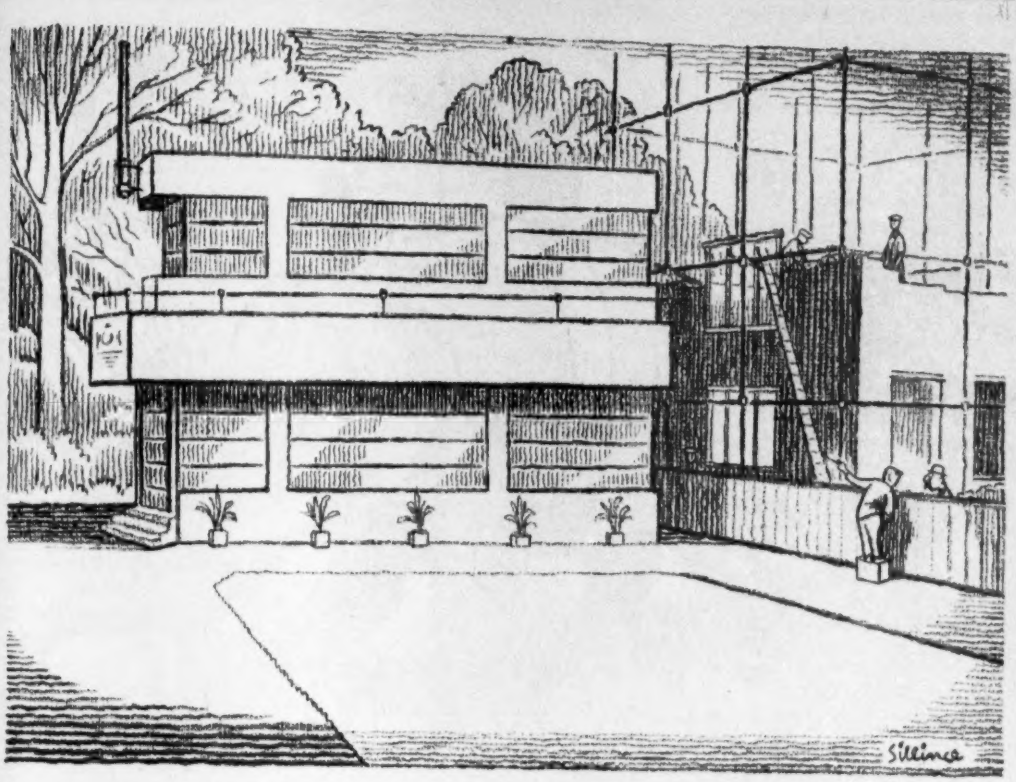
There is good swift acting in *King of Gamblers*, chiefly by Claire Trevor as *Dixie* and Helen Burgess as *Jackie*, both cabaret-singers, and by Lloyd Nolan as *Jim*, the reporter whose twin aims in life are to pin five murders on to *Kalkas* and to make *Dixie* Mrs. Jim; but the immunity of *Jim* when he is in *Big Edna's* populous house and is never overheard and never seen as he prowls about it is a blot, and another blot is his unarmedness when he visits *Kalkas*. But why worry? *King of Gamblers* runs its thrilling course very satisfactorily, the shaft of the private elevator is twice fallen down, and all's well that ends well.

It is melancholy when a cinema star dies, and particularly so when she is only twenty-six. So widely are films now distributed that such a death brings the idea of mortality to hearts and bosoms the world over. Jean Harlow, who began in rather a spoiled way, was becoming a very good actress, with a special aptitude for turning and rending, and her white head will be sadly missed by us all.

E. V. L.

Extremely Dry Dock

"Freehold double-fronted ship with upper part situated in an excellent position near the station. Let to a Builders' Merchant and Ironmonger on a full repairing and insuring lease for 21 years without a break from Christmas, 1936, at £150 p.a. exclusive."—*Estate-agent's Advt.*



"I SAY, DASH IT! THESE ARE PRACTICALLY ANCIENT LIGHTS, YOU KNOW!"

A Quorum

"I WOULD be much obliged," I said to Edith, "if you would find out which week-ends during June and July Colonel Hogg and Johnson-Clitheroe and Entwhistle and the two Miss Waggs propose to be away, as I wish to arrange a meeting of the Literary Society Committee."

"In the middle of summer?" asked Edith. "It sounds silly to me."

"If you will cast your mind back," I said, "you will remember that we had a meeting in March to consider next winter's programme. The members were in a talkative mood, and we adjourned at twelve without having passed a single resolution. A second meeting produced much the same result, and was adjourned indefinitely to make way for the special Coronation Committee. So we now find ourselves halfway through June without any programme for next winter, and you know perfectly well that if we leave it much longer all the best speakers will be snapped up."

So Edith paid a few calls in the village, and presently came back with the information that the only week-end the entire Committee would be available was June 19th–20th.

"Thanks," I said, "but that isn't quite the information I want."

"It's the information you asked me to get," said Edith.

"Not at all," I replied. "I asked you to find out when the members would be away. I want to fix a date when nobody can come, so that I can carry through the business on my own. So far as I can see it is the only chance we have of getting out a programme before the winter is upon us."

"But what about a quorum?" said Edith. "You can't transact any business unless there is a quorum, can you? How many is a quorum?"

"Four," I said; "but we can get round that all right. I am a Vice-President and also Secretary, and you are a Vice-President and also Social Hostess, so I shall simply put in the minutes that there were present two Vice-Presidents, the Social Hostess and the Secretary. We can then do it all in about an hour."

"It seems rather underhand," said Edith.

"I'm certainly not prepared to have any five-hour committees in this sweltering weather," I said firmly. "Can you recollect which dates the members said they would be away?"

Eventually we discovered that on July 3rd–4th we would have a clear field, so I posted off notices fixing a Committee meeting for July 3rd in the Parish Hall.

On the day after the notices went out the telephone-bell rang a good deal.

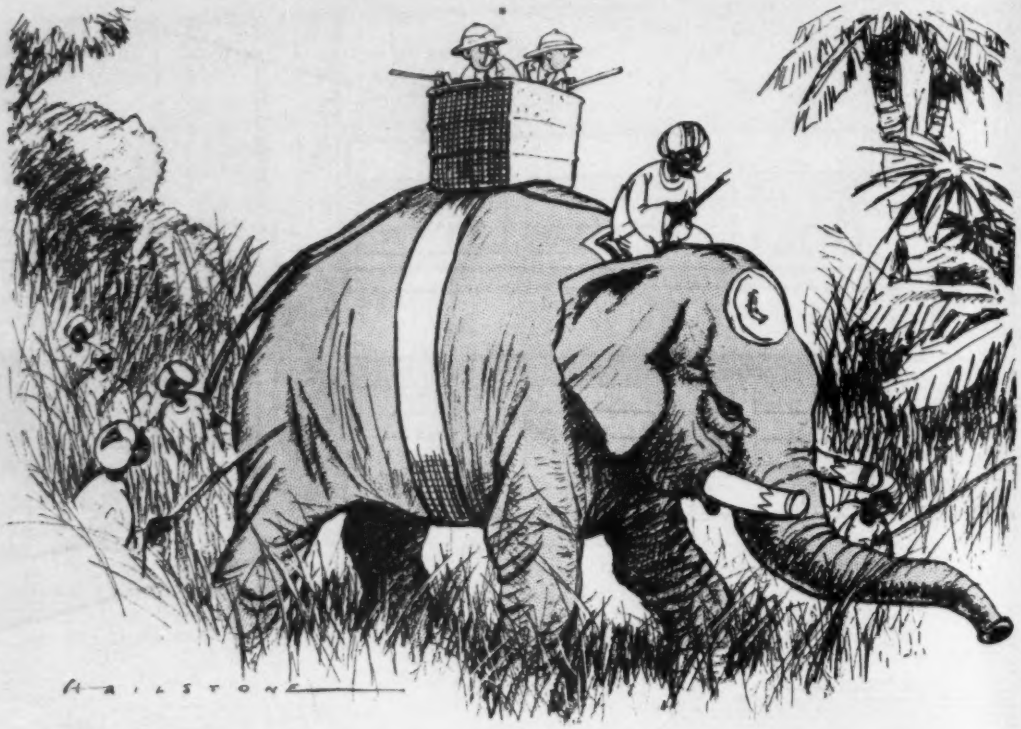
"Can't you alter the date of the meeting?" asked Colonel Hogg. "I'm particularly anxious to be present, but I shall be playing golf that week-end."

"I'm sorry," I said, "we can't change the date, but surely you won't let your golf stand in the way of your duty to the Society? It's hardly playing the game, if I may say so, Colonel."

He said that he was afraid he couldn't scratch his golf, but he was quite apologetic about it; and so were the other members of the Committee when I spoke to them in the same way.

"I think I've got out of a difficult situation rather neatly," I said to Edith.

"It was a good idea," she admitted, "but I've just remembered that *we* shall be away on July 3rd–4th. That's the week-end we promised to go and see Aunt Betty."



"I WOULDN'T HAVE BOTHERED TO COME OUT EAST AGAIN, ONLY MY WIFE WANTED ANOTHER ONE TO MAKE UP THE PAIR."

Mothers' Meeting

(Prep. School Sports Day)

"YES, a wonderful day! . . . Yes, almost too hot. . . What a very long list of events! . . . Is that the Cricket Professional in that terrible green-and-yellow blazer? Oh, the Headmaster? Oh, *really?* I didn't recognise . . ."

* * *

"Oh, Mrs. Singleton, I suppose your Stanley is going to win simply everything."

"Oh, but I thought your Leonard . . ."

"No, no; he's not in the same *class* with Stanley."

"What *non*sense! I'm sure he is. I hear he's improved so tre*mendo*usly this term. In simply everything."

"Oh . . . Yes, I think he has. . . . I'm *so* glad to hear Stanley is getting over that horrid stammer. Such a handicap . . ."

* * *

"Gregory has won the Senior Hundred Yards."

"Dear me! What a splendid-looking boy!"

"Yes; but you know, I don't believe in all this training. Not at their ages. When it comes to taking Epsom Salts every day to get their weights down . . ."

"Epsom *Salts*!"

"Yes. Every day. And, my dear, I *know*—at least I'm almost certain—they bant and bant."

"And they don't get too much to eat at any time, do they? I think the catering . . ."

* * *

"That's Gribble major, Mother. D' you see that mark on his face?"

"No, dear. Oh, yes, I see it now."

"Guess how he got it."

"How could I? *Do* tell me."

"Well, he was climbing up after a tree-creeper's nest and the bird flew out and pecked him right in the cheek. And Feathers, who was there, said 'What cheek!' Wasn't that good, Mother?"

"Yes, dear, *very*. But are you allowed to go after birds'-nests?"

"No, of course not; that's why we do it."

* * *

"Gregory has won the Senior High Jump."

"Dear me! He seems to be a wonderful athlete. Are his people here? Oh—*those*!"

"*He* must be a good deal older than *she* is, don't you think?"

"Oh, I don't know. She's very much made-up, isn't she?"

"He looks very worried, poor man."

"Bored, *I* think. Of course it's a very hot day."

"What a dreadful hat she has on! You know, my dear, it surprises me every year, some of the parents one sees here . . ."

"Yes, *aren't* they!"

* * *

"Yes, they go to bed nice and early, but don't tell me they go to sleep. Else how do they get ink on their pyjamas? Their *pyjamas*!"

* * *

"Mother, do you know why they have to have a tape for the High Jump?"

"No, dear. Why?"

"Because there isn't a lath. But do you know *why* there isn't a lath?"

"No, dear. Why?"

"Because *I* broke it. One night Gribble minor and I . . ."

"Oh, Mervyn, how *daring* of you!"

* * *

"Is *that* the Matron?"

"She looks very young, doesn't she?"

"*Too* young."

"Shouldn't she have a uniform or something? I quite thought she was somebody's sister."

". . . overdressed . . ."

"I don't believe she does a *thing*. Peter says . . ."

". . . and last term when Lionel had those horrid chilblains . . ."

". . . inexperienced. . ."

"*She* doesn't care! And what *is* that frightful scent she uses?"

"Oh, they like the scent. The boys do, I mean. My young man says they always know when she's coming; they can smell her half a corridor away."

"Well, I don't think *matrons* . . ."

* * *

"Gregory has broken the record for Throwing the Cricket-Ball."

"Gregory again! You wouldn't think, to look at his parents . . ."

"No, *would* you?"

* * *

"Mother, we had horse for dinner yesterday. Stevens has lived in France and he said you can always tell. He swore it was."

"I hope you didn't eat it, darling."

"Rather not! We cut out the gristly bits and chucked them about. I hit Gribble major . . ."

* * *

"*When* do we get tea?"

"They *said* four-thirty, but there seem to be endless events yet."

"Oh, dear! These dreadful chairs! S-sh! The Headmaster! . . . Yes, indeed, Mr. Pollinger—most comfortable . . . perfectly lovely . . . I *do* congratulate you . . ."

* * *

"Gregory has won the Senior Two-Twenty Yards."

"Bother Gregory!"

* * *

"Well, *that*'s over! . . . Oh, Mrs. Richmond, I *was* so glad the Headmaster asked you to present the prizes. We all thought *last* year . . ."

"Yes, but if you think I liked being called upon as the Senior Mother . . ."

"Oh, but I'm sure he never thought . . ."

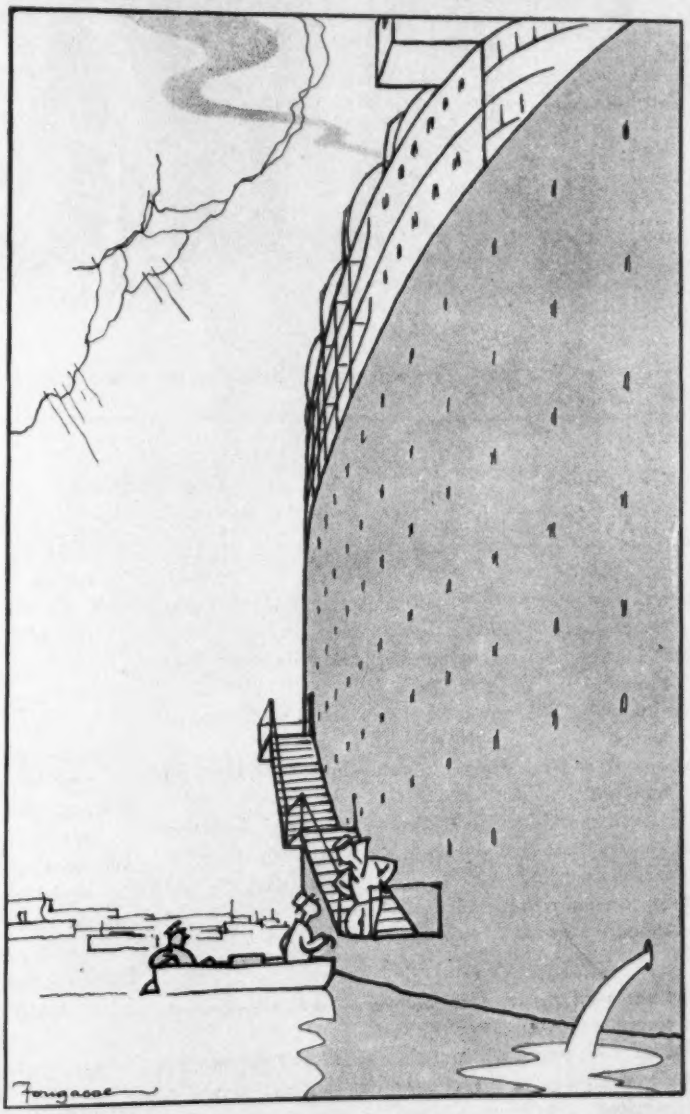
"Well, he ought to have thought. The Senior Mother indeed!"

* * *

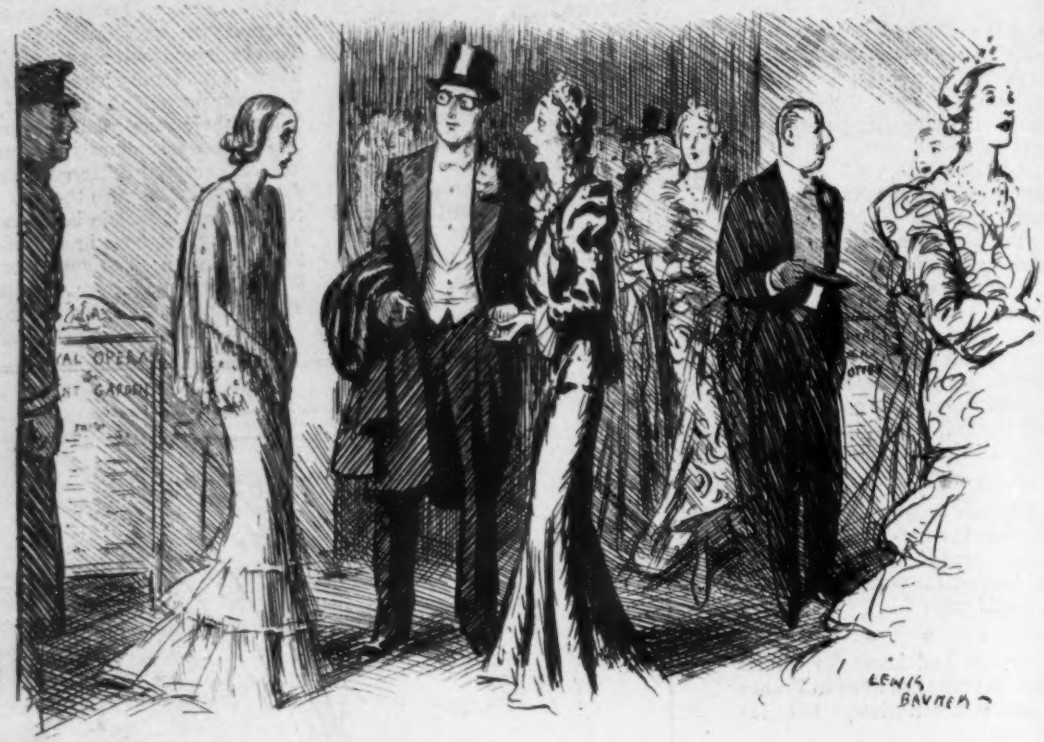
"Well, good-bye, good-bye. *Such* an enjoyable afternoon. . . . Now, Harold, for goodness' sake drive home *quickly*. I'm *dead*!" H. B.

Perplexities of Nature

THE bony twig, the barren bough
Are in their full regalia now.
The idle empty-handed earth
Assists incessantly at birth;
On every atom of its space
Happy events have taken place,
And unions have been more than blessed
In burrow, chest-of-drawers and nest.
On any morning may be seen
The uneventful evergreen,
A mother smothered by her shoots
With little strangers at her roots.
Amid the healthy ill-bred weeds
The plain but well-connected seeds
Extravagant additions grow
That their own mothers wouldn't know.
There is no doubt there is no drought
That can prevent their coming out.
Where there were celandines before
Are greater celandines and more;
Where there were buttercups last May
Are bigger better cups to-day,
Nor matters it that in between
There may not be a breath of green.
So why does nothing sprout or hatch
On that once thickly-growing patch,
That empty but well-tended bed
The top of Uncle George's head?



"I WANT TO VISIT A FRIEND ON BOARD; UNFORTUNATELY I HAVEN'T ANY IDEA WHAT HIS ADDRESS IS."



"Of course I know one has to go, but it is so unutterably un-gay, isn't it?"

The Optimist

"Ships—they're all right," said Murphy, "for all you hear folks tell.
There's some shoves their bows under in a seaway, and there's some rolls like hell;
There's some as can't wear nor stay, and some won't steer a course
Without pullin' the arms out of you like a bad-tempered horse;
And some's wet and some's wicked—but taking them all together
And allowing for things like bad crews an' contrairy weather,
And owners that skinny they'd die afore they'd bust a farden on paint—
Why, ships ain't that bad," said Murphy—"not to my thinkin' they ain't.

"The sea's all right," said Murphy, "if it's took as it comes—
Good an' bad, rough an' smooth, Trade an' Doldrums.
There's pamperos and southerly busters, and maybe a hurricane
Or a typhoon or such little divarsion just now and again;
But takin' the high with the low latitudes and all the way round,
Why, the sea ain't that bad," said Murphy—"leastways, not as I've found.

"Chaps, they're all right," said Murphy, "took one with another—
There's some as'd slit your throat for a nickel if you was their born brother;
There's them as never earn their whack or work a traverse or pull their weight;
And some's that crooked they'd make a dog's hind-leg look straight;
Some'd pinch the pennies off a man's eyes and he lyin' dead;
But lookin' at 'em wholesale and in the lump, why, chaps is mostly decent," he said. C. F. S.

"As a matter of fact, Sir Anthony was not even near the garage at the time. He was seated in the drawing-room, left to his own reflections and the sight of Sandy's red hair hidden behind the paper."—*Novel.*

Frankly, we are not satisfied with this explanation.



SIGNS OF THE TIMES

BAGMAN VON NEURATH. "CAN I INTEREST YOU IN THIS NEW LINE OF OURS THAT WE'RE SHOWING, SIR?"

Impressions of Parliament

Synopsis of the Week

***Monday, June 7th.*—Commons: Debate on Agriculture.**

***Tuesday, June 8th.*—Lords: Debate on Information from India.**

Commons: Debate on Housing and Health.

***Wednesday, June 9th.*—Lords: Introduction of Lords Baldwin and Samuel.**

Commons: Debate on Imperial Preference.

Monday, June 7th.—There seems to be a good deal of doubt about the condition of the Basque children who are in camp at North Stoneham. In answer to Miss CAZALET the new Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health, Mr. BERNAYS, stated that the number in camp was being reduced as speedily as possible and that, while the five cases of typhoid, two of diphtheria and three of measles which had occurred had been isolated, precautionary measures were being taken. On the other hand, Captain BALFOUR offered information from local residents that the camp lacked adequate medical arrangements and that many of the helpers had no means of communicating with their charges. Mr. BERNAYS told him he would be glad to have it.

Having made the belated discovery during to-day's debate on Agriculture that in barnyard circles eggs are counted in long hundreds, Mr. P.'s R. offers as a contribution to Parliamentary etiquette the suggestion that if ever a Minister of Agriculture should wish to resign his seat, he should apply formally for the Orpington Long Hundreds.

It is greatly to be hoped that the present occupant of that office will make no use of this elegant formula, for if ever a Minister was likely to satisfy the farmer that he is doing his best for him, he is Mr. MORRISON.

While he hoped, he said, soon to be able to bring forward proposals for the reform of the milk scheme, he reminded the House that it had saved the milk market from collapsing altogether; he also hoped soon to say something of advantage to the bacon industry, and he promised to keep an eye on the difficulties of the small poultry-producer.

Towards the end of his speech he laid great emphasis on the importance of grass from the point of view of national defence. Still the staple food of the animal, it grew very well in this country and its yield could easily be increased by 15%, which would be enough to feed another million cattle.

As a victim of hay-fever Sir FRANCIS ACLAND assured the House that there would be nothing wrong this year with the hay crop; he went on to draw a gloomy picture of the financial position of the farmer, who was up to his ears, he said, in debt either to the banks or the agricultural merchants. Mr. TOM WILLIAMS begged the MINISTER to interest himself in the housing of agricultural labourers. Sir EDWARD GRIGG urged that we should follow the lead of other countries and institute a system of cheap credits for the farmer; and Mr. LLOYD GEORGE, whose utterances read more and more in the style of COBBETT, deplored the fall in the rural population, damned the Government's drainage scheme as preposterously inadequate, demanded that the farmer should be helped to recondition his land, and asked, not for the first time, for a complete survey of the agricultural potentialities of the country.



PREPARING THE PROPAGANDER
SIR KINGSLEY WOOD

[A campaign to popularise the National Health Services is to begin in the Autumn.]

Tuesday, June 8th.—The effect of the new Indian constitution on the rights of Members to ask for information relating to Provincial government was the subject of a question this afternoon by Lord LLOYD, who expressed anxiety. Lord ZETLAND told him that it was no longer open to the India Office to demand information as regards the ordinary administration of a Province but that where a Governor's special responsibilities came in it retained every right to lodge inquiries. In the course of the discussion Lord LOTHIAN made an admirable appeal to Congress to show a reasonable attitude in the present deadlock.

Coupled with President ROOSEVELT's denials that America is considering any change in her gold policy, Sir JOHN SIMON's statement in the Commons that British monetary policy remains the same will be extremely welcome in the City. In these two tonics our sagging stock markets may find new health.

Sir KINGSLEY WOOD's survey of his Department showed all the energy and imagination for which he is now famous. Very lucidly he described how disease, the shortage in cheap houses, and the slums were being successfully fought, and he announced that in the autumn he proposed to launch a national campaign, in association with other authorities, to encourage the people to make fuller use of the health services. In passing he was able to give the House the happy conclusion of his expert tipsters that for the next two years influenza would be milder.



KILLING THE CANARD
SIR JOHN SIMON



"DON'T YOU THINK, HENRY, IT'S ABOUT TIME WE SENT LITTLE CHRISTOPHER TO THAT PREPARATORY SCHOOL AT BISHOP'S STORTFORD?"

The subsequent debate was active and well-informed. Sir PERCY HARRIS echoed what so many must be feeling, that London is in grave danger of becoming a city of flat-dwellers. Mr. LANSBURY and other Labour Members pointed irrefutably to poverty as the prime cause of ill-health. Mr. GODFREY NICHOLSON urged the need, and quite rightly, of a conference to deal with the disastrous effects of advertising on the countryside, and Captain COBB claimed that those who turned country cottages into week-end retreats should be obliged to provide alternative working-class accommodation.

Wednesday, June 9th.—The House of Lords drew an unusual number of peers and their friends this afternoon to watch the introduction of Lord BALDWIN and Lord SAMUEL, a picturesque and complicated ceremony which ended in a hearty shaking of hands with the LORD CHANCELLOR, and also, one suspected, in hearty sighs of relief.

Afterwards their Lordships debated the varying treatment of the native races within the Empire, on Lord NOEL-BUXTON'S motion asking for an Imperial Conference to promote their interests. He and other peers contrasted the economic freedom of the native of West Africa, who participated in his government, with the very different position of the native of South Africa, who, in the words of the PRIMATE, "was exposed to the restraints and indignities of the class laws and subjected to a strange discrimination in the administration of justice."



OUR BACK-BENCH *WHO'S WHO*

You may assume
That one of the L.C.C.'s
Busiest bees
Has been Sir GEORGE HUME.

Lord MOYNE held that there were many parts of Africa in which the native would have been far happier if he had only been left alone. And for the Government Lord DUFFERIN defended the differences in restriction and claimed that the Government's policy, which never lost sight of native welfare, should not be altered.

In the Commons Sir JOHN SIMON and Mr. OLIVER STANLEY refereed discreetly between the Socialists and the Liberals on the one side, who begged the Government to go easy with Imperial Preference in order that a better trade understanding with America should not be prejudiced, and the forces represented on the other by Mr. AMERY and Sir HENRY PAGE CROFT, who declared that as it was little enough was being done for the Empire. The view of the Treasury Bench seemed to be that Empire Preference as it existed was no obstacle to an Anglo-American agreement.

Invitation to the Match

"LET me see," commanded Lorna.

Ferdinand handed over the letter and self-consciously attacked his egg with a late cut.

"'DEAR FERDINAND,'" my wife read aloud, "'I am getting together a team to meet the Great Baconfold Eleven on Saturday. Can you play for us? I remember your fine innings against Maldon at school. Twenty-seven, wasn't it? Hope you can manage it. Yours sincerely, T. FEATHERSTON.'"

"It was twenty-nine actually," said Ferdinand. "Featherston was never any good at maths."

"But great Hendren!" I cried. "A batsman in the family! Can you bowl as well?"

"I once took ten for one," replied Ferdinand carelessly.

"I mean the other way about of course," he added hastily.

"Fast, medium or slow?" asked Lorna.

"Slow, mostly," replied Ferdinand. "Er—blobs. It's a long time ago, of course."

"I thought a blob was another name for a scorer," I said innocently.

Ferdinand blushed.

"Batting *was* my strong point," he said. "By Jove! didn't I give my—er—willow away?"

"You gave it to old Bullock," said Lorna, "and he uses it for setting seed potatoes."

"And pads," pondered Ferdinand. "I shall have to get some pads."

I got pencil and paper.

"You will require," I said, "the following." And I wrote them down.

"Bat, one, capable of snicking a fast ball between your legs for two.
Oil, linseed, for same, one bottle.
Handle, rubber, for same.
Pads, two, for left and right legs.
Gloves, batting, for ditto hands.
Boots, two, for ditto feet.
Whitening for same. (Boots, not feet.)
Cap, for handing to umpire before bowling.
Blazer——"

"Your blazer's all moth-holes," interrupted Lorna, "and your white trousers are mouldy."

Ferdinand drew a deep breath.

"I don't care," he said recklessly; "I'll get 'em all. Can't let the side down, you know. Who makes the best bats these days?"

The next few days were full of bustle and excitement. Parcels arrived by every post. The smell of linseed-oil penetrated to the very attic. For the first time in history Ferdinand mowed and rolled the lawn. And on the evening before the match he took batting-practice.

My first ball (a sighting shot) decapitated four lupins in the region of point. Ferdinand steered the second with the edge of his new bat neatly into the greenhouse next-door.

My third ball, delivered after a short but embarrassing interval, was bowled just as the telegraph-boy came up the drive. It caught Ferdinand, who had turned round to see who was arriving, on the side of the head.

We brought him round by holding the linseed-oil bottle under his nose.

"The telegram?" he murmured.

My wife read it aloud.

"'Sorry,'" it read. "'Match cancelled. Can you make up a bridge four. FEATHERSTON.'"



"HE 'S FROM THE CITY. HE SAYS HE ONLY HIRED IT TO GET A CORNER-SEAT."

At the Play

"JUDGMENT DAY" (STRAND)

Judgment Day is very good entertainment and comes as a gift to all those people who keep saying that the theatre should deal less with the transient love-affairs of persons in easy circumstances and more with public life. It is a study of justice being perverted for political ends in a modern totalitarian state. The whole play is the trial, and the dramatist's problem was how to bring out the sustained ruthless and unscrupulous character of the régime without producing an effect of monotony and depression. This problem is very ably surmounted; there is no monotony and there is constant fresh excitement. The red cloth of the tribunal contrasts with the green robes of counsel and the symbolism of the new régime to make the court a colourful place: and what is true of the scenic setting is true of the large cast.

Mr. ELMER RICE can fill a street or a court with a crowd of people and give individuality to each. The bench of five judges contains a fine exponent of the old tradition, a polished but not really strong lawyer, an unscrupulous politician and two "arrivistes." The dock contains two fiery proletarians and one drugged and half-witted tool. The witnesses are of all sorts, and at one moment a prima donna comes forward with her tantrums—she is excellently played by Miss FREDA JACKSON—and gives a note of light variety while substantially advancing the story.

Sometimes the search for lively human interest leads to pitfalls. There is a dreadful piece of crude child pathos in the Second Act, and the finale becomes a cheaply melodramatic tableau. But, in general, the play has swift movement and good character-drawing. At times, as in the indecision of *Judge Vlora* (Mr. DOUGLAS JEFFERIES), it is deep and real, and the degradation of man by fear, which is its moral, is illustrated from a succession of angles. It is good and impressive, but it would have been better still if Mr. RICE had been a little more objective and had not let himself be carried away by the rhetoric of the accused leaders of the People's Party. He is too much their partisan, seeing that it rests with him to show us in the leader *Vesnic* (Mr. ALAN WHEATLEY), in *Rakovski* (Mr. ALAN NAPIER), and in *Judge Tsankov* (Mr. RONALD ADAM) the embodiments of a political régime which presumably has something to be said for it. *Tsankov* alone of the three is something more than a caricature. But *Rakovski* is a figure for a Communist summer-school play, whereas the accused, *Khitov* (Mr. ERIC BERRY) and *Lydia Kuman* (Miss CATHERINE LACEY) are equally the hero and heroine of any Left Wing cartoon with symbolical figures of the workers of the world. Some efforts have been made to generalise the play and to give it a modern Puritanian setting, but it remains altogether too much indebted to the Reichstag fire trial and too little indebted to the Moscow treason trials to be a general dramatic treatment of the latest totalitarian forms of that age-old abuse, the corruption of Justice.

An attractive young American (Mr. DAN TOBIN) brings a refreshing note of American Law School into the proceedings, which in the liberties allowed to counsel are faithfully modelled on the American courts. The accused are, it is true, much more grimly separated from their friends, but they have many opportunities of dominating the Court. The story of the attempted murder is not the centre of interest, for we are in our seats to watch the slow murder of Justice herself. It is well worth watching, but it would have been a play in a different class if its author had himself been able to do more than justice to the prosecution and to be less submissive for the defence. We know that *Khitov* in power would have been as impatient as *Tsankov* of the forms of Justice if they got in the way of the programme of his People's Party: Mr. BERRY makes this very plain by his portrayal of the reckless and fanatical revolutionary leader, but Mr. RICE has preferred to take the theatrical or political advantages of a simple and obvious hero and heroine and a Good *v.* Bad theme and to forgo the dramatic opportunity to write a truer but less obvious study with the good and evil mixed and present on either side of the conflict. D. W.



A YANKEE AT THE COURT OF A DICTATOR

Dr. Wolfgang Bathory . . MR. REGINALD JARMAN
Conrad Noli . . . . . MR. DAN TOBIN



AN ACCOMMODATING ASSASSIN

Kurt Schneider . . . . MR. PHILIP LEAVER
Gherau . . . . . MR. RICHARD HINTON

"Yes, My Darling Daughter" (St. James's)

The girls who chained themselves to Cabinet Ministers' railings, flung stink-bombs amongst the most sacred rituals of the Ancient Order of Buffaloes, and did nameless things with bradawls to the wicket at Lord's, all in a fortunately quite unrepresentative attempt to show how entirely unfitted was their sex for any shadow of public responsibility, had a difficult row to hoe afterwards when the male had given in and the big battle was over on the official front. Some of them went out into the by-ways searching insatiably for minor wrongs, others retreated quietly into the comfortable haven of marriage.

One of the latter was *Ann* (Miss Sybil Thorndike), who had shouted herself hoarse for women's independence and had carried the campaign into the moral sphere and set up flat with a young poet who had been sufficiently imprudent to register their bliss on paper, though under a nom-de-plume.

Subsequently, after this single flutter, *Ann* had merged her independence and her name with that of a decent, solid, incredibly British banker, *George Murray* (Mr. Evelyn Roberts) and had lived with him in extreme content and complete fidelity long enough to have reared a daughter, *Ellen* (Miss Jessica Tandy), to the point of leaving Oxford and embarking on the adventurous career of a journalist.

At the beginning of this comedy the peace which enveloped the *Murrays'* country-house was deceptive. First *George's* sister *Constance* (Miss Margaret Bannerman) arrived flushed with the triumph of her third or fourth divorce. Then a famous literary agent, *Titus Jaywood* (Mr. Leon Quartermaine), whom *Ann* had not seen for over twenty years, joined the party, no one knowing that he had been the partner of her Bloomsbury idyll. And finally *Ellen's* young man, *Douglas* (Mr. Alec Clunes), appeared, to compose a silly lovers' quarrel and announce that in two days' time he was off to South America.

With hereditary impetuosity *Ellen* suggested that they should spend the week-end together, and after considerable persuasion *Douglas*, whose laces were straighter, agreed. It was *Ann's* discovery of her daughter's intentions, at the end of the First Act, which launched the play on its proper course. Up to then nothing much had happened except an orderly introduction of the characters; these had been presented not as pawns for a debate on the stage, but as carefully-drawn genuine people, so that, although the First Act was inclined to be slow, it was alive and therefore never tedious.



TURNING THE TABLES ON MOTHER

Ellen Murray . . . Miss Jessica Tandy
Ann Murray . . . Dame Sybil Thorndike



DITTO ON FATHER

Douglas Hall . . . . Mr. Alec Clunes
George Murray . . . . Mr. Evelyn Roberts

From *Ellen's* determination to put into practice the independence she had learned from her mother, a number of excellent situations arose, situations where comedy was nicely tinged with irony and weighted with something a little heavier.

Ann, her earlier creed sunk at the first attack of the maternal instinct, begged and then commanded *Ellen* to give up her plan, only to be met with the cool retort that her daughter had celebrated her last term at Oxford by a detailed research into the more personal issues of the women's movement. Shocked that her mother should ever wish to recant the philosophies of her Bloomsbury episode, *Ellen* won the first round; and after *Ann* had made her position as a parent still more difficult by meeting *Douglas* and liking him, the youngsters went off.

In the scenes which followed, *Jaywood* stood by, a cynical commentator (looking as if he had passed his life in the plum Chancelleries of Europe—he had been almost miraculously tidied up since the corduroyed days in Charlotte Street); *Constance* fluttered foolishly, with the infinite respect for the conventions which so often assails the endlessly divorced; *George* played the outraged father to the point of arranging for a special licence; and *Ann* spent the week-end in a whirl of conflicting emotions.

The last scene of all, in which the straying couple returned from what *Douglas's* scruples had made a mere platonic excursion, provided the piquant situation of the boy turning furiously on parents so criminally lax as knowingly to permit their daughter to run such risks.

The Second and Third Acts were distinctly bright. Mr. Rodney Ackland, who has written the English version from the American of Mr. Mark Reed, has wisely not gone out of his way for wisecracks but has brought out the full humour of the plot.

The acting is as good as one would expect from such a first-class team. Miss Thorndike's performance is a lovely comment on the nicest vagaries of woman.

Eric.

The Gulf Stream

I SEE that there is to be an investigation into the conduct of the Gulf Stream. I hope that it will be stopped. I hope that at this difficult time public money will not be spent upon such an object. It is unnecessary. I *know* about the Gulf Stream.

From my earliest youth the Gulf Stream fascinated me. I received the lying legends they teach you in the schools—but in my secret heart I laughed an unbeliever's laugh. Heavens! the tales that are told about the Gulf Stream! It is responsible for the English weather and the gentle English character, for our love of ball-games and capacity for writing healthy prose. If the Gulf Stream did not bathe our shores Cornwall would lose its palm-trees, ice would form all over London, and the island-race would creep into mud-huts and compose grim sagas in Scandinavian verse. Heavens, the lies!

Here in this house to-day I have an encyclopædia which says that the Gulf Stream begins its career at forty miles an hour, slowing down to ten as it approaches the Newfoundland Banks (a built-up area!).

The other day someone said how fortunate it was that the Panama Canal had locks, for otherwise the Gulf Stream would have slipped down the drain into the Pacific Ocean. The Thames would have frozen at Southend, cricket would have been impossible, and Mr. ISAAC FOOT become Prime Minister.

Men will say anything about the Gulf Stream. To the scientist the Gulf Stream is as the spring to the poet, as the sea-serpent to the Press, as *Hamlet* to Mr. JOHN GIELGUD—a never-failing stand-by. When all else is barren and dead, when Mars refuses to approach the earth, when there are neither sun-spots nor comets and nobody is visiting the Pole, the scientist trots out a new theory about the Gulf Stream and gets a medal.

But I have never believed a single word that anybody said about the Gulf Stream.

I remember having a row with my second governess about the Gulf Stream. I inked the Gulf Stream in our atlas red, to make things clear. To this she strangely objected. I said red was the right colour for hot water.

She beat me.

To-day I see that in my great modern atlas the Gulf Stream is painted red. Which raises the question: Is the Gulf Stream now British?

When the Gulf Stream is painted red the whole fraud is at once apparent. The Gulf Stream, as you may remember, begins in the Gulf of Mexico. It rushes round the Gulf of Mexico in the hot sun, and, having in this way generated warmth, it shoots off into the Atlantic Ocean and steers a north-easterly course. (I am recounting still the official theory, which is indicated on my atlas by dear little arrows.) Eventually, however, like Oxford Street, it changes its name and becomes the North Atlantic Drift. On it goes, still red, still arrowed, and still the same current. At last it reaches the British Isles and rushes past the West Coast, thus causing the genial men of Manchester and the perpetual sunlight of Glasgow and the Hebrides.

But now the odd thing is this—that the warm red stream, instead of turning back and causing the Mediterranean, as you might expect, goes on to Scandinavia and presumably causes the snow-mountains and winter sports. It goes on, according to my atlas, past Scandinavia, to the very top of Scandinavia, practically to the North Pole. And this, mark you, is the same stream which is supposed to be responsible for cricket, Ascot, strawberries and the speeches of Lord BALDWIN.

Well, I remember saying to my second governess, "This is all lies."

She beat me.

I raised other points. The Gulf Stream is responsible for our character and climate, they say, and presumably the Gulf Stream is fairly constant; or, if not, it ought not to be marked so dogmatically on the map. But our climate is different every year. Therefore you have a constant cause producing very varied effects. "Lies," I said. She beat me.

"In the alternative," I said, "if the Gulf Stream, which causes our climate and weather, is *not* a constant but a variable thing (which would explain the insane variations of the weather in G.B.), then by observing the variations of the Gulf Stream's behaviour you should be able to predict the weather in England. Suppose, that is, that the Gulf Stream is hot one month, causing a fine Whitsun, and tepid or cold the next, causing a wet Ascot—suppose that at x miles an hour any given section of the Gulf Stream crosses the Atlantic in y number of days, then, by taking its temperature as it leaves the Gulf of Mexico and making a simple calculation, you could tell the poor farmers when to take in the hay."

She beat me.

"And *what*," I said, "becomes of the Gulf Stream in the winter-time?"

She beat me.

All through the Great War the Gulf Stream worried me, and I promised myself that when I was demobilized I would travel out and inspect the thing on the spot.

I did. I took a sailing-dinghy and a great number of corks. These corks were painted green for better observation, as I quite expected the Gulf Stream to be red. It was not. Nor was it as hot as I expected, considering that it had to travel all across the Atlantic in order to cause the primroses in Hyde Park. However, I placed my corks in the water and cruised about while they drifted away.

The corks duly drifted round the Gulf of Mexico, travelling clockwise. They made, I calculated, about fifteen knots; not so much as my encyclopædia would suggest, but not a bad speed for mere corks conveyed by a mere current.

When we had nearly completed the circuit of the Gulf and were approaching the point from which we started I shortened sail and made all fast and ready for our emergence into the open ocean.

But we did not emerge into the open ocean.

The corks went round the Gulf of Mexico again.

I shook out a reef, catted the anchor and followed the corks. They were now making, I thought, about eighteen knots. I was not yet seriously disturbed. The Gulf Stream, no doubt, was gathering momentum for the long



"IT *IS* RATHER ON THE SMALL SIDE, ARTHUR, BUT IT MEANS LESS RUNNING ABOUT FOR ME."



"WOULD ANY OF YOU GENTLEMEN LIKE A GAME OF POKER?"

and hazardous leap across the Atlantic, and soon we should be off.

But when we set out upon the *fourth* circuit of the Gulf I began to worry.

Something had gone wrong with the Gulf Stream. Probably this was due to me. For I have a rare and deleterious influence upon natural phenomena. Many of us can stop a favourite racehorse by putting half-a-crown upon it; but I can bring snow to the Riviera at the height of the season; I can cause clouds before breakfast in Jamaica, simply by being present.

And now I had upset the Gulf Stream. With a piece of mechanism so large, delicate and cumbrous that was not at all surprising—to me.

My mind flew back to the teaching of my second governess, and, so powerful are the influences of childhood, I recalled that teaching with serious apprehension. England, over there, was relying on the Gulf Stream, and, through my intervention, the Gulf Stream had stopped working. Families were making plans for seaside holidays, Mr. SYDNEY CARROLL was preparing Shakespeare in the Park, the Varsity Match was ten days ahead, beauties were buying frocks for Goodwood, the corn was coming up in the Shires and the strawberries going down on the Terrace—and all this, the tranquil and generous processes of life in the temperate zone, would soon—who could say how soon?—be cut short. Ice would form on the Thames at Southend, polar bears would appear in Piccadilly, Mr. ISAAC FOOT—— But I think that I have explained already how much we owe to the Gulf Stream.

What was I to do? I could not even warn my country. We were in 21° N 94° W, and I could see no telephone-box.

We went round the Gulf Stream for the fifth time. Thinking of my second governess, no doubt, I did the old childish trick and trailed my hand in the water. It was much hotter than before. I seized the thermometer and made the temperature 121° B.S.T. And at that moment I perceived a great commotion on the western shore of the Gulf. I had kept well away before, knowing that the wild tribes of the Puztec Valley had their dwelling there. But now I put the helm down and stood in. I saw a kind of rude pier. I saw smoke and flames, and the naked savages dancing round what appeared to be a number of gigantic cauldrons. And, as I approached, with a great noise, the contents of one of these cauldrons was tipped into the sea. The sea steamed, the savages yelled: I put the helm hard over and sailed away in some alarm.

What were these mysterious rites? Was it the second course of some missionary meal that I had seen consigned to the sea? Was it a trick to keep the mariner away? Perhaps we shall never know. But at least the secret of the Gulf Stream was out. The phenomena observed by so many sea-captains are *not* the work of Nature, but the Puztec tribes, who, for purposes unrevealed, have a habit of pouring boiling water into the sea. *And it never leaves the Gulf of Mexico.*

Therefore, as I had always suspected, it has nothing whatever to do with the climate and character of Great Britain, with our love for ball-games, the speeches of Lord BALDWIN, with Mr. ISAAC FOOT or anything else.

This was proved when I returned to these shores. It was an exceptionally fine summer and the hay-crop was excellent.

And if you do not believe this story there is not the smallest reason why you should believe any of the others.

A. P. H.



"DEAR, DEAR, DEAR, YOU *would* KEEP ME CHATTING AND NOW JUST *see* WHAT YOU 'VE DONE."

Villainy in a Colony

"THERE is no department of your national life," said M. le Curé, looking severely at Père Junot as he hobbled, leering, down the street, "so full of perfidy as the sport, and of the black-hearted men of sport there are none to equal those who practise their brutalities at Manchester."

"The poet calls it dark and Satanic," I said, "but that refers to the sky and the dialect, not the hearts of the sportsmen."

"There is, Agnès Dupont assures me," replied M. le Curé, "a part of Manchester called Le Vieux Trafford."

"If there is one part of Manchester more Satanic than another, it is doubtless Le Vieux Trafford," I said warmly. "But how does Agnès know this?"

"Agnès," replied M. le Curé, "has been at the London house of Chose Frères, her employers, and she has made the week-end at Manchester with the sister-in-law of her landlady. That I, understand, is the pastime of the English gentry."

"They are passionately devoted to it," I said. "There is at Manchester I know not what that attracts the boulevardier and the demi-mondaine. It is like your Nice, your Cannes, but fuller, richer, more flamboyant, with the pomps of the First Empire and the abandon of the 14 Juillet. And this applies more particularly to the locality called Le Vieux Trafford."

"Agnès did not call it flamboyant," mused M. le Curé. "She called it revolting. But she applied the adjective to the dresses of the ladies and to the eating of fried fish out of newspapers. Is the eating of fried fish necessary to the sport?"

"It is the local custom," I said. "Like bull-fighting at Nîmes or the bourrée in Brittany. But what did she see at Le Vieux Trafford besides people eating fried fish?"

"She returned full of contempt for the sport," replied M. le Curé, "though she admitted that the flannels of the players were chic. But I understood that flannel was a Victorian form of clothing?"

"That," I said, "is red flannel. English youth frequently gets up in the middle of the night to laugh at the thought of red flannel."

"The laughter of English youth," mused M. le Curé with a little sigh, "must be very refreshing."

"It is fantastically refined," I assured him. "But what of Le Vieux Trafford and the black-hearted ones?"

"Agnès," resumed M. le Curé, "was taken to Le Vieux Trafford to see the cricket form. Tell me—is the word 'form' a noun or a verb?"

"It is a noun," I said, "and usually a hard one. Concrete, as it were."

"There was one sportsman," he went on, "black of hair, and also, said the spectators, of heart. As soon as he appeared the assemblage cried loudly *'Qui a cassé l'horloge?'* For it seems that once at Le Vieux Trafford this sportsman, no doubt instigated by the Devil, broke with great violence a clock. It must have been a diabolical possession, for why should a man climb the roof of a pavilion to break a large clock?"

"The minds of sportsmen are tortuous," I said, "and they do evil mightily with their hands. But go on."

"While the black-haired one leaned on his implement," said M le Curé, "one spectator told the others a tale of low villainy, at which they rejoiced

greatly. It seems that in one of your English islands somewhere in the far ocean there was a regiment of English soldiers. It was the custom of the officers of this regiment to play at cricket with the sergeants, while the rest of the military gathered round—no doubt to utter respectful cries at appropriate moments."

"That is a part of military routine," I explained. "One calls it the hooray party."

"The first sergeant to appear was a monster, black-haired, with a black moustache of the most *farouche*. He behaved with incredible cruelty to the officers. Some he cut, some he smashed, the remainder he drove ignominiously out of the field. He was so heated by these abominations that his moustache fell to the ground and the villain stood revealed. He was no sergeant. He was this same black-haired sportsman, this breaker of clocks, who at that time was on holiday in the island. The sergeants had with horrid malice borrowed him for the day. Why, Monsieur, was he not hurried to the *salle de police*? Why did the officers not demand satisfaction? Why did the spectators at Le Vieux Trafford guffaw with approval at this shocking story? Is it not that your sport is full of perfidy?"

"Remain tranquil," I said. "This black-haired man was once a sergeant, in which capacity he fought the Boche. Moreover he comes from Yorkshire, a part of England where the natives are filled with low cunning. They are also distinguished by that pigheadedness which in better men we call resolution. These two attributes explain why they were not exterminated by the Romans, who named them Brigantes, or brigands."

A happy thought struck me. M. le Curé's parish is in Normandy, but he himself is a Provençal.

"Yorkshire," I said, "is the English Normandy."

He rubbed his hands together and smiled pleasantly.

"Now I understand," he said. "It is just what my people would do."

W. G.

Ballad of a Homeless Bat

THE man was going in to bat;
The bowler, flushed with joy,
Stood waiting to complete his hat;
There came a village boy:

"Put off your gloves of rubber proof,
Unguard each careful shin;
The curse has fallen on your roof;
Your house has tumbled in."

White as his boots the batsman grew;
He cast his pads away;
His gauntlets to the winds he threw.
The Captain cried, "I say,

Go in, poor homeless one, and bat,
Stern as the nether rock;
E'en though that house of yours be flat,
You'd better have your knock."

"My little home," the batsman wept,
"So trim it was and tight;
I always had it nicely swept;
It had electric light.

And is there left no tiny shred
Of the whole bag of tricks?"
The boy with urchin relish said
Laconically, "Nix."

"Let me go hence; nay, hold me not."
Then loud the Captain cried,
"You, you alone can stay the rot;
Think, batsman, of the side.

Your kindling eye, your stubborn heart
Alone can make things good;
You would not land us in the cart";
The victim said, "I would."

Then spake a man of subtler mould:
"A year ago, no more,
Yon bowler, haughty man and cold,
Had you out leg-before.

Did you not seal a solemn oath
To clump him for that crime
O'er yon tall tree, or tent, or both?
You did. Then now's the time."

Up sprang the batsman with a frown,
And like a man he spoke:
"Let every house come crashing down,
The pub dissolve in smoke;

I will not guard each careful shin;
Give me my bat, no more;
With knuckles bared will I go in
And larn him leg-before."

Homeless but noble, in he went,
A broken soul was he,
But he lammed that blighter o'er the tent,
The bounder o'er that tree.

DUM-DUM.

"245,000 SEE ABBEY DECORATIONS.
THOUSANDS TURNED AWAY."
Headings in Sunday Paper.

There 's no pleasing some people.

"On the wings of the fears comes the married man's hat, which upon the wearer's late arrival home, is thrown into the room as an ambassador of peace, while he awaits the fate of its reception outside the door. Should it be thrown out again he knows he is in dire disgrace. But if it rests there undisturbed then he may follow in its wake with impurity."
Article in Australian Paper.

Well said.



"STOP, EVERYBODY! THEY'VE CHANGED THE TITLE FROM 'TROPICAL PASSION' TO 'LOVE IN THE FROZEN NORTH'."



"GROUNDSEL? YES, MADAM, THE ORNITHOLOGICAL DEPARTMENT."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

A Statesman Portrayed

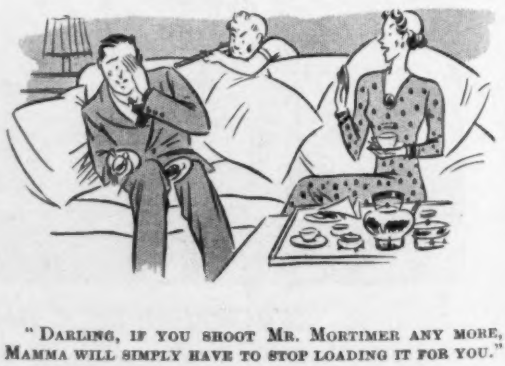
IN *Stanley Baldwin : A Tribute* (HAMISH HAMILTON, 3/6), author and subject are well met. For Mr. ARTHUR BRYANT is not only the lively historian of Restoration England but, like the ex-PREMIER, an eloquent expositor of that enlightened Toryism which they both believe to offer the only sure hope of an England restored. As history this little book does not take us very far. Nor is it meant to. It is, as it is called, a tribute—of friendship for a man and of admiration for a statesman whom Mr. BRYANT does not hesitate to place among the great Prime Ministers and to compare with CROMWELL and LINCOLN. Not that he is uncritical. He notes an occasional indiscretion, apart from that "successful avowal of mistakes" on which Mr. CHURCHILL has recently commented with such felicity; and a habit of procrastination, of shelving distasteful tasks or decisions, indicating a pleasant touch of MELBOURNE, as well as of the austerer PEEL, in a make-up more complex than is apparent to the casual eye. It is, in fact, a very human figure that Mr. BRYANT has portrayed; and, lest we should suppose that his hero was born mature and equipped at the Carlton Club, he has given a quarter of his pages to the early years at Bewdley, when an unknown ironmaster who had in him the makings of a poet was studying the Englishmen whom he was one day to govern. He has done well too to be copious in quotation, for admirably as Mr. BRYANT writes English, the late Prime Minister speaks it even better.

A Vision of Progress

The BROWNING of *Paracelsus*, so long without a disciple, might recognise in the Mr. ALFRED NOYES of *The Torch-Bearers* (SHEED AND WARD, 7/6) a kindred spirit and a less "gothic" adapter of his own fluent decasyllables. True the epic theme of scientific progress allows a poet less freedom than the unknown legend of an obscure Swiss charlatan; and it is with restricted scope for invention and greater compulsion towards clarity that Mr. NOYES tells of the astronomers from COPERNICUS to HERSCHEL and the evolutionists from PYTHAGORAS to HUXLEY. He exhibits the die-hards of Church and State at odds with the pioneers of enlightenment, and having worked up to a superb conjunction of scientific attainment—a vital operation directed by wireless in mid-Atlantic—gives the last word to a humble dispenser of divine mysteries. "The *vera causa* that Lamarck had known" will some day, he hopes, reconcile both parties. It is a momentous conception; and yet when you have praised this and its epic achievement you turn back to descriptive and lyric passages where the poet, self-exiled, has regained a paradisal liberty: the Lichfield of ERASMUS DARWIN and the "Phœnix" song which ends the monologue of LEONARDO.

St. Helena Revisited

Thrusting aside respectfully but firmly the shades of MASSON and Lord ROSEBERY, M. OCTAVE AUBRY has written what it is hard not to envisage as the positively last word on the last phase of NAPOLEON. He has taken close stock of *St. Helena* (GOLLANCZ, 18/-), the "mildewed isle" where the French Government has reconstructed NAPOLEON'S Longwood and taken over the empty tomb that has ceded its dead to the Invalides. He has traced the conflicting spirits of the captivity and its lethal routine with tireless discernment and impartiality; and the result is a volume of over six hundred pages, every page of which is a living record of that interminable dying. England is arraigned for stupidity rather than for malice. "General BUONAPARTE" succumbed to a necessarily fatal cancer, and the island was not a tropical death-trap. But the disease was undoubtedly abetted by the climate and by the restricted régime imposed partly by HUDSON LOWE and partly by the victim himself in protest against LOWE'S espionage. "Purified and magnified" as he grew closer to death, M. AUBRY'S NAPOLEON ends by assuming a dignity and charm which surmount the mental and physical torture that destroyed him.



"DARLING, IF YOU SHOOT MR. MORTIMER ANY MORE, MAMMA WILL SIMPLY HAVE TO STOP LOADING IT FOR YOU."



FULL CIRCLE



AS WORN

"DEAR UNCLE BEN—YOU'RE ALWAYS SO KIND!—*would* YOU SIT ON MY BONNET A LITTLE? I'VE TAKEN OUT THE PINS."

George Du Maurier, June 21st, 1890.

"Custody of the Children"

Miss E. M. DELAFIELD has written many clever books: *Nothing is Safe* (MACMILLAN, 7/6), though it will not be the most popular, is probably the cleverest of them all. She has written it entirely from the point of view of a little girl of ten, and contented herself with a section of life rather than a novel—for there is hardly enough movement either on the physical or the spiritual plane to constitute a story—and yet she keeps her readers keenly interested from beginning to end. The book is a child's-eye view of the situation when man and wife part and each marries again. *Julia*, a healthy, complacent, successful little girl, and *Terry*, her sensitive, shy, ill-balanced brother a year or two older, through whom alone she is vulnerable, find themselves in effect without a home, not much wanted anywhere; for the parents, who intended to share custody of their children, and are still fond of them, are each at the beck and call of a new partner. It is a book that might well make any mother or father hesitate, however tempted, to place any child in such a position.

The Tragic Dancer

The most interesting part of ANATOLE BOURMAN'S *The Tragedy of Nijinsky* (HALE, 12/6), because it covers new ground and is the least contentious, is the account of the training in the Ballet School of St. Petersburg with its queer glimpses of contemporary Russian life during the years immediately preceding and following Red Sunday. The author presents his credentials as biographer and commentator. He shared with four others, all now dead, NIJINSKY'S seven years' course of study; he was continuously his colleague in the ballet, in minor rôles, till the tragic end; and he claims to have been his most intimate if not his only friend. He has no doubt whatever of his hero's

unchallengeable supremacy as dancer and mime. Of his character we are shown aspects which seem to suggest that his mind was never wholly untouched by the disorder revealed in the final breakdown. Mr. BOURMAN (now an American citizen) is of the anti-DIAGHILEV faction; but no one seems to be able to make temperate judgments in this affair. He gives circumstantial details of the succession of startling "accidents" on the stage which have been before described as evidence of a plot against the dancer's limbs or life—but they are not the same details. He says nothing of the alleged "Tolstoyan" intrigues. It is a pitiful story, and one wishes that it could for a time be veiled in a compassionate silence.

The Obverse of a King

It would almost seem that Mr. C. E. LAWRENCE, in choosing RICHARD III. as one of his heroes in *The Gods Were Sleeping* (MURRAY, 7/6), felt that it would be rather fun to make out a better case for that monarch than most of his forerunners have. He shows him to us chiefly through the eyes of young *Bart*, servitor at the "Boar's Head," and later found to be the illegitimate son of faithful *Sir Robert Brakenbury*. To *Bart* RICHARD is a gracious if tragic figure whose smile wins a follower's heart for ever. As for any rough stuff about murdering one's nephews, little RICHARD dies in the QUEEN'S arms from natural causes, and *Bart*, acting as a decoy to his enemies, enables young EDWARD, with his uncle's consent, to set out for Holland. At Bosworth Field *Bart* shares RICHARD'S last heroic moments and is rescued from among the dead by the servant-maid who had loved him in his "Boar's Head" days. It is an amiable if ill-written story, and who shall decide now whether Mr. LAWRENCE or Mr. SHAKESPEARE has had the right end of this particular stick?

Stories From India

The jacket of *The Cobras of Dhermashevi* (HIGGINBOTHAMS, Madras, Rs. 2) prepares the reader for something perfectly terrible (in more senses than one), and an unnecessary Preface, in which Mr. S. K. CHETTUR flourishes at him JOYCE, nudists and D. H. LAWRENCE, does little to allay his apprehensions. These obstacles surmounted, however, he will arrive at a baker's dozen of slight innocuous stories happily confirming in matter and manner neither jacket nor preface. With two exceptions they relate to South India, varying in theme from the supernatural to the humorous. Merit also varies; four of them are no more than bald accounts of typical South Indian criminal cases —which do not necessarily make a story. Perhaps the pleasantest—though again it is rather a reminiscence than a short story—narrates the experience of an Indian hockey team touring Germany; the weakest is an impossible tale about an Indian student and a film-star in London. Mr. CHETTUR might study with advantage the honoured advice about moving briskly *in medias res*. My chief complaint, however, is that his stories are "Westernised"; they exhibit very little of that below-the-surface India one might justifiably expect from an author with his advantages. If he would forget Western models and look a little deeper into his own country he should be able to do better than this.

Good Relations

Lovers of cricket have already sound reasons for being grateful to Mr. HUGH DE SELINCOURT, and *The Saturday Match* (DENT, 5/-) will add to the debt they owe to him. Whether he is writing of the *Kimptons* in their home or on the cricket-field he gives a vivid picture of a keen and sensible family. In these days, when cricket is reported by specialists and stylists, it is no small feat to have described the match, in which young *Kimpie*, aged fourteen, made his first appearance for Tillingfold, so delightfully that the game from start to finish can be followed with zest. Mr. DE SELINCOURT allows sentiment to enter freely into the lives of the *Kimptons*, but he is never in danger of confusing it with sentimentality. Mr. JAMES THORPE'S numerous illustrations harmonise so completely with the text that they are most valuable additions to this pleasant story.



THE CUSTOMS OFFICER LOOKS FOR A CLEAN COLLAR."

Three Brothers

It was no cause for wonder that *Bernard Franklin* wanted to sell his enormous and dilapidated country-house, but when some prospective purchasers went to inspect it they received rude shocks and surprises. The early scenes of *A Single Hair* (COLLINS, 7/6) have been admirably staged by Mr. HERBERT ADAMS, both *Franklin* and his ménage are enveloped in an atmosphere of mystery and doom. So when a double crime took place the majority of the survivors, including that astute investigator, *Roger Bennion*, were more horrified than astonished. A confession written by *Bernard* to the effect that he had killed one of his brothers and himself made the position easier for the police. But what appeared to be barren ground for *Bennion* soon became richly fertile. On this occasion he may have been a little slow in solving the problem, but even if that is granted Mr. ADAMS once again has provided his readers with an ingenious and exciting story.

Things That Might Have Been Put Differently.

"ETON BOYS FORBIDDEN TO BATHE.
RESIDENTS' COMPLAINTS OF THAMES POLLUTION."
Headings in Daily Paper.

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Charivaria

"A LITTLE novel which, once picked up, cannot be laid down," runs a publisher's advertisement. This will be at all events a change from those 900-page ones which, once laid down, can hardly be picked up.

* * *

A farmer complains that labourers work for him for a few weeks in the spring and then drift to the towns. Apparently they plough the fields and scatter.

* * *

One of our champion dart-throwers always holds a pint tankard in his left hand while throwing with his right. His fellow-competitors are naturally rather apt to resent this lack of confidence.

* * *

A chef has been explaining that during the recent hot spell salads were the first favourites and fruit dishes the second. The butter also ran.

* * *



We are informed that the film *The Good Earth* was made in Hollywood because China itself was found to be unsuitable. Of course film-going Chinese must have realised long ago that their country was quite hopelessly untrue to type.

* * *

One can get rid of wasps in the house, it is claimed, by catching them with a jam-jar. Preferably just behind the ear.

* * *

A New York policeman was saved from death when a bandit's bullet was stopped by a pad of summonses in his pocket. This should teach policemen with summonses in their pockets to keep them there.

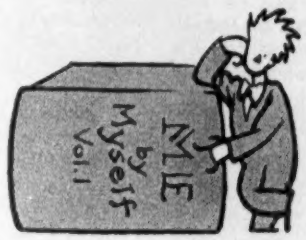
* * *

"Wasps can fly for twelve hours without settling," states a naturalist. Unfortunately we always seem to meet them at the end of the twelfth hour.

* * *

"At the election of churchwardens, the Vicar said in the past they had done very well and he thought they could not do any better than ever before."
Local Paper.

That seems fair enough.



Scientists were two seconds out in their calculations concerning the duration of the recent eclipse of the sun, which was the longest for 1,238 years. Still, better luck in 3175.

* * *

"THE FAMILY DOCTOR
By Dr. Morris Fishbein
TO AVOID PARROT FEVER, KEEP AWAY FROM SICK BIRDS."
Philippines Paper.

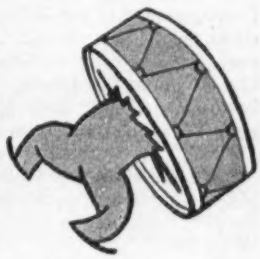
Thank you for the tip, doctor.

* * *

The man who complains that he doesn't know what to do with his spare time might easily use it for reading the literature of the advertisers who claim to know what he can do with it.

* * *

A noise which was mistaken for a shot caused a panic in a Paris theatre. It is rumoured that the man with the big drum beat it.



* * *

"The screen-play has got nearer the people than any other form of entertainment," remarks a *Daily Express* leader. To the increasing discomfort of the patrons in the very front rows.

* * *

"Sir Samuel spoke in a debate on prisons. He said he had formed the impression that the chief problem was how they were going to prevent the young prisoners from going back again to prison after he had finished his sentence."—*Evening Paper.*

Why not take a hint from those speakers who *never* finish a sentence?

* * *

"Week-End Tickets for Salmon and Sea-Trout on the Conway," reads an advertisement in *The Fishing Gazette*. But will the salmon and sea-trout bother to use them?

* * *

"You can board a taxi in New York," says an American visitor, "and three hours later you'll still be in New York." Much the same thing could be said about Oxford Street.

* * *

"Men who wear feathers in their hats are decadent," asserts a psychologist. If we were a Field-Marshal we should resent that.



Suitably Staged

"*Hamlet* at Elsinore," remarked Everard Galliproof, lightly flicking off the head of one of the Office of Works' best dandelions with his stick, "I can understand and approve; though I make the reservation that for consistency's sake they ought to give the play in Danish. But *Twelfth Night* in a Downham public-house, which I see announced by the Oxford University Dramatic Society in my newspaper this morning, I cannot comprehend.

"I know *Twelfth Night* pretty well," he went on, which meant that he had looked through it before he came out so that he could expatiate upon it with confidence—"I know *Twelfth Night* pretty well, and I think I am right in saying that, with one exception, all the scenes take place either in the *Duke's* palace in Illyria, in or before *Olivia's* house or garden in Illyria, or on the sea-coast of Illyria. The one exception is marked vaguely 'In a street.' Nowhere can I find any mention of the action moving to a public-house, in Downham or anywhere else."

"Neither," I protested mildly, "will you find any suggestion that the action took place in a theatre."

Everard ignored my interruption. "Of course," he added, following up his last sentence but one, "the anonymous street might have been a street in Downham. It might even have been Downham High Street, if there is one, and the pub in question might have been represented on the back-cloth, if only they had had back-cloths in SHAKESPEARE's time; but somehow I just don't think they were.

"Not," he continued, murdering another dandelion, "that I'm in any way conservative in my ideas of where a play should be performed. In fact if you ask me, 'Why play *Twelfth Night* in the local at Downham?' I answer you, 'Why not?'"

"Do you?" I said.

"Certainly I do," Everard replied. "Try me."

"All right. Why play *Twelfth Night* in the local at Downham?"

"Why not?"

"O.K., Chief," I said vulgarly. "Go on."

Everard did so: "Why not, if it comes to that, play it in the Café Royal or the Savoy Grill-Room or the 'Running Horse'? After all, variety is the spice of life, isn't it?

"My complaint, however, is that there is nothing appropriate about the venue. Clearly if the action is laid in the *Duke's* palace and you aren't going to play it in the *Duke's* palace then you might just as well do it in a theatre where everyone can see in comfort and quite a lot can even hear as well. After all, there's no sense in *making* difficulties, is there?"

"No," I agreed.

"Well, you're wrong, as a matter of fact," Everard contradicted. "There is—for the simple reason that the public likes it. There's a big demand for SHAKESPEARE in bizarre and exotic settings; and that's why, if I can only get a manager interested, I prophesy a big future for the new scheme I have in mind.

"I propose to find a really outlandish and inconvenient setting for each of SHAKESPEARE's plays. To start off with, of course, we shall give performances of *Timon of Athens* at Athens; *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* at Verona; *Pericles, Prince of Tyre* at Tyre; and so forth.

"Later on we shall deal with the more difficult ones. Look at *The Tempest*, for instance; all the help you've got is that it takes place on 'an island.' Lots of people, of course, think that the whole of the action takes place in Regent's Park, but I doubt if that theory would stand investigation. My own idea is that the island was Capri. That would account for people like the *Duke of Milan* and the *King of Naples* going there for their holidays.

"However, I doubt if we shall really find it satisfactory to give the whole of the plays in any one place. Take *The Winter's Tale*: half the time you're in Sicily and half the time you're in Bohemia. Naturally in my production the Sicilian scenes would be done in Sicily and the Bohemian ones in the Savage Club or the Ham Bone or Czecho-Slovakia or wherever Bohemia has gone these days.

"Then in things like *Antony and Cleopatra* we could run the play in conjunction with the Polytechnic as a Grand Tour. One moment you're in Rome; then you dash off to Alexandria; then three scenes in Messina; then Misenum and Actium and Athens and Heaven knows where else. And for the bits where it says things like 'Enter *Octavius, Cæsar, Lepidus* and their Train,' we could run over to Victoria Station and introduce the arrival of the Brighton Belle. There's nothing like aptness. In *Macbeth*, for example, when the *Porter* says, 'Knock, knock! Who's there?' I should have him on the stage of the Holborn Empire." Everard enthusiastically decapitated a tulip.

"An even better idea," he went on in a crescendo of ambition, "is to have the thing done by wireless. We'd have a landline from every place mentioned in the play and broadcast effects while the actors read their parts in the London studio."

"What sort of effects would you have," I inquired, "to make a house in Illyria sound any different from a house in Downham?"

"None, probably," Everard admitted. "Don't you think life in Illyria was probably much like life anywhere else? But you'd have the satisfaction of knowing that it *was* in Illyria, wouldn't you?"

"If that sort of thing gave you any satisfaction," I conceded.

Everard moodily uprooted a hydrangea. "Don't you think it's a good idea?" he asked.

"Frankly," I said, "no."

"Neither do I," said Everard.



"I TELL YOU, BARTHOLOMEW, I DON'T THINK THE PUBLIC REALISES THE REPERCUSSIONS THE UKASE OF THE KREMLIN OGPU MAY HAVE ON THE QUAI D'ORSAI AND WILHELMSTRASSE."

"If your nose is too prominent, select a hat whose brim extends beyond it both in the front and in the back. This will help to reduce nose importance."—*Daily Mirror*.

We *like* nose importance.



THE DEATH-HUG

"OF COURSE YOU UNDERSTAND THAT THIS IS ONLY PART OF OUR UTOPIAN SYSTEM."



THE BRITISH CHARACTER

A TENDENCY TO PUT THINGS AWAY SAFELY

Driver Girth Defeats a General

I CANNOT help feeling that our Battalion gets more than its fair share of visiting Generals who appear to be fire-worshippers. By that I mean Generals who obviously suffer from ingrowing pyrolatry and when inspecting you do nothing but pry minutely into your fire-fight arrangements and equipment and then make you put out imaginary fires all over barracks to see what happens. No names, no pack-drill, but no doubt you remember the General I told you about in these pages some while back who suddenly invented a fire actually *in* our fire-station and all over our new fire-engine simply in order to see us use an elderly and long-superseded manual engine as understudy.

Well, he visited us again just the other day, but this time we think he rather met his match. You see he came up against our Driver Girth, and our Driver Girth, who has not been with us long from his home in the agricultural depths of West Loamshire, is fat, stolid and so unbelievably slow in the uptake that they say he had to be put through his squad drill with sticks of dynamite instead of words of command. Anyway, he's the kind of chap we keep well away from visiting Generals. It's kinder to both of them.

It was as a matter of fact Major-General Sir Spurde Feele-Boote's own fault—there, I've told you his name, but no matter!—for he went round to the back of barracks and got into our transport lines. (No one of course knew he was meditating an informal visit or we'd have had a cordon of fleet-footed scouts all round the place from daybreak on, each one guaranteed to reach the Adjutant's office and sound the tocsin within fifteen seconds.) Accompanied by his A.D.C., he wandered about, more or less unnoticed, except for an occasional casual salute, and that rather in the nature of a friendly greeting than a tribute to superior rank, for our drivers are an independent bunch. Not that General Sir Spurde Feele-Boote could object. As he so often says, he prefers "to see the men as they really are," and so, by gosh! if he arrives unheralded in our transport lines he's getting what he wants.

Then he entered one of the stables. It was empty except for some two-dozen horses and Private Girth in his shirt-sleeves smoking a cigarette. For a time the pair looked at one another, till Girth's brain slowly took in the fact that the newcomer was (*a*) an officer and (*b*), judging by the red and gold about him, a fairly rare one. The mental effort of this, however, told so



"My Lord, some—er—foreigners to see you!"

heavily on him that he was unable to do anything more about it till the General suddenly barked "Well?"

Private Girth jumped, started to salute, remembered vaguely some admonition about not saluting without a tunic or cap on, and abruptly turned and went away.

The General called him back and asked him where he was going.

"To get mah coat an' caap," replied Girth with a touch of reproof, and the unexpected simplicity of the explanation so surprised the General that Girth was able to find the necessary garments and return, remarking affably as he struggled with buttons, "You see, Zur, I'll be having to salute ye, woan't I?"

The General, still trying to find words, did not answer, and this rather alarmed Girth, never strong on points of military etiquette. He began to wonder whether a salute mightn't be a social error after all. "Or will I?" he added anxiously.

"You will!" the General managed to get out.

Girth saluted, still with his cigarette going.

"*And* don't salute with a cigarette in your mouth, man!" snapped the General suddenly in such good voice that Girth jumped several inches, lost his cap, threw the cigarette away, found his cap again, and put it on, all in three seconds.

"What would you do if there were a fire in these stables?" suddenly asked the General, choosing his favourite topic of conversation with casually-encountered soldiery.

This sort of thing was quite above Girth's head. He merely stared vacantly at the less inspiring end of a nearby horse, and the General repeated.

Again nothing got home.

"Wouldn't you even tell someone there was a fire?" pursued the General a little more kindly. "Then the fire-engine could come and put it out." He was now plumbing Girth's intellect and realising its shallow draught.

Girth, however, merely tried the end of another horse and said "Ar," hastily adding "Zur," as his earlier impression that the fellow might be an officer (which had been driven out of his head by the subsequent give-and-take of new ideas) suddenly recurred to him.

"There is a fire in this stable," announced the General clearly but between his teeth. He repeated it twice, but all Girth did was to revolve agitatedly on his axis and finally salute the end of yet a third horse.

At this point the General left. He felt he just Wanted to Forget. Later he arrived on the barrack square, where he was spotted by the Adjutant, who explained at great length all the fire-fighting arrangements and finally had a practice fire-alarm for him at the Clothing Store. Whereat what was ostensibly the fire picquet, but actually a squad of our best runners, hastily collected by the R.S.M. while the Adjutant was playing for time, rushed out and did their stuff.

The next move would have been to give the delighted General a glass of sherry in the Mess, but we were frustrated by the entirely unexpected arrival, hot and eager and in full force, of the local civilian fire brigade.

Not even our Adjutant, who's pretty good at impromptu explanations, could get the General to believe this was one of the most efficient touches in our usual fire practice; nor would the local brigade admit they had made a mistake. The situation, already difficult, was not improved by the discovery that it was the delayed-action receptivity of Driver Girth's mental processes that was to blame. Some while after the General had left him the significance of his last remark suddenly penetrated. With the simple faith of a son of the soil he went off and informed his sergeant that there was a fire in the stable—yes, he knew because an officer had said so some while before and had told him to tell someone. The sergeant had barely time to take this in when the practice fire-alarm went off at the Clothing Store and, realising that this complication would mean even further serious delay, he had promptly rung up the local brigade. . . .

Rescue came from an unexpected quarter. A bale of straw in the stable, in which Girth's hastily-discarded cigarette had for some while been smouldering, chose just the right moment to burst into violent flame. The right moment for *us*, that is, not for a young and inexperienced fire; for what with our picquet *and* the local boys, it never got a chance. And the Adjutant, who is pretty good at impromptu explanations, somehow managed to get us the credit for the whole business.

Driver Girth now has an intense admiration for all Generals. "He toald me right enough there wor a fire," he goes about saying, "but I'm beggared if I could see 'un. But *he* knawed!"

A. A.

Different

I never thought much
Of Caroline Clutch;
I couldn't abide
Ann Hyde;
I fled like a hare
From Phillipa Fayre;
I hid in a hut
From Miss Mutt.
I loathed the whole flock
(I know you'd agree)
But all the same it gave me a shock
When I learnt that they didn't
Think much
Of me!



"This is the Marquis of Granby speaking."

The Wedding Presentation

An Office Operetta

Scene—THE STAFF DINING-HALL. *Time*—4.30 P.M.

Characters:

THE BRIDE-ELECT THE MANAGER
THE BRIDEGROOM-ELECT THE STAFF

As the curtain rises the Manager, *chatting affably with heads of departments, is seen standing by a table on which reposes a valuable canteen of cutlery. The* Staff, *wedged in a perspiring mass, are engaged in a spirited scuffle with the object of getting as near as possible to the scene of action, those on the outskirts of the throng smoking surreptitious cigarettes and masticating chocolates. An air of excitement and expectancy prevails.*

OPENING CHORUS

Ceasing for the nonce to labour,
Flinging clerkly tasks aside,
Substituting pipe and tabor
For the pen all day we've plied,
Here in subterranean regions,
Where the air with grease is laden,
We, assembling in our legions,
Welcome colleagues, man and maiden
(She so fair and he so courtly),
Who are getting married shortly.

Manager. As sure as I'm alive
It is now 4.35,
And the turtle-doves, I notice, haven't managed to arrive.
Why on earth they don't appear
Is a point that isn't clear.
What the deuce can be the matter? Why the blazes aren't they here?

Staff. Since you ask us, Sir, we fear
That their absence (which is queer)
Is conceivably the reason why they're neither of them here.

Enter Bride- *and* Bridegroom-Elect *in haste, blushing furiously, amidst a buzz of anticipation.*

Staff. They come! They come! Behold the amorous pair!
With joyous cries now let us rend the air.

Bridegroom-Elect. We crave forgiveness if we're late;
Respectfully I beg to state
Exactly why you've had to wait.
Succumbing to temptation,
Upon the stairs, upon the sly,
With no one nigh to peer or pry,
There my prospective spouse and I
Indulged in osculation.

Staff. With no one near to pry or peer,
The couple, as the coast was clear,
Indulged in osculation.

Manager. Out upon thee! I exclaim.
Naughty! Naughty! Fie, for shame!
As the time 4.40 is,
Let us now proceed to biz.

SOLO (*Manager*)

First Verse

Your earnest attention, good friends, I invite
To the tale I am going to tell;
Its theme is familiar to all who delight
In the works of Miss ETHEL M. DELL.
These worthy young people have fallen in love;
Their troth they have solemnly plighted;
And although it is rash, for they haven't much cash,
They are bent upon being united.

Staff. At Penge he'll reside with his beauteous bride
When they have been duly united.

Second Verse

Miss Smith in the Typists' Department has served
For nearly three years and a half;
From rectitude's path she has never yet swerved
Since joining the Company's staff.
Mr. Jones keeps a ledger; with overseas sales
His duties are closely connected;
And I'm sure you'll agree when I mention that he
Is a man who is highly respected.

Staff. He is rather an ass; never mind, let it pass
That he's more or less highly respected.

Third Verse

How the courtship began I've no notion at all;
She typed out his drafts, it may be,
Or he captured her heart at the Annual Ball
Or clicked after tennis and tea.
When I say I don't know, and what's more I don't care,
The truth I am frankly confessing;
But this gift, on behalf of the whole of the staff,
I trust they'll accept with my blessing.

Staff. Presentations galore are becoming a bore;
Still, we echo our principal's blessing.
[Manager, *amidst ringing plaudits, hands canteen of cutlery to* Bridegroom-Elect.

Staff. See our comrade's colour rising,
Scarlet too his future mate;
Each—the fact there's no disguising—
In a highly nervous state.
(*To* Bridegroom-Elect)
Come, good fathead, we beseech;
Make the usual rotten speech.

SOLO (*Bridegroom-Elect*)

If I hesitate and stammer and I'm shaky in my grammar
In the course of these compulsory remarks,
Bear in mind it isn't easy to be eloquent and breezy
When addressing supercilious City clerks.
Like a worm I writhe and wriggle as the lady-typists giggle;
At the funny man's "Hear, Hear!" I'm fit to sob;
And although it's rather pleasant to acquire a wedding-present,
Saying "Thank-you" is a thankless sort of job.
Still, I beg to state sincerely that this cutlery is clearly
Just the thing a newly-wedded pair require;
And in accents that are broken I assure you such a token
Was entirely unexpected. (Who said "Liar"?)
I repeat that it's a pleasure to receive a gift we'll treasure
Till our locks become as white as winter's snows.
(*Shows signs of emotion*)
And before I burst out crying, for this ordeal's rather trying,
I will bring these observations to a close.
[*Loud applause.*

Manager. To exercise my powers of persuasion
I now proceed. (*To* Bride-Elect) Methinks, fair wench, that you
On this unique historical occasion
May feel disposed to say a word or two.

Staff. Oh, mighty one,
A sage suggestion!
Its wisdom none
Can doubt or question.



"LIGHT, SIR? WHY, YOU WON'T HARDLY KNOW YOU 'VE GOT IT ON."

Bride-Elect (*advancing coyly*). Albeit I'm bashful, it's true——
Staff. C'est vrai!
Bride-Elect. —may I make some remarks, just a few?
Manager. You may.
Bride-Elect. With a sorrowing heart, now we finally part,
I reluctantly bid you adieu.
Staff. Oh, stay!
Bride-Elect. I've enjoyed my commercial career.
Staff. Don't go!
Bride-Elect. The Chief is an absolute dear.
Manager. No, no!
Bride-Elect. And you've all been so sweet that I'm yearning to greet
With a hug ev'rybody that's here.
Staff. What ho!
[*Sensation amongst* Staff, *those in the background making frenzied efforts to break through.* Bridegroom-Elect *advances with upraised hand.*
Bridegroom-Elect. The hours are fleeting,
So I propose
That this here meeting
Forthwith do close.
Manager. I second that, for time is getting on,
And personally carry it *nem. con.*
Now, while the youthful twain are with us still
We'll give them "three times three" with right good-will.
So let it rip with loud "Hip, Hip!"
For the couple who are going into partnership;
And once again with might and main
For the prepossessing damsel and the stalwart swain.
Sing hey! Sing ho! for the blithesome beau
And the marriageable maiden of this well-known Co.
Staff. Then let it rip, etc., etc.
[*Deafening and prolonged cheers.*

FINALE

Hail the bridegroom! Hail the bride!
(He so courtly, she so fair).
Beef and beauty are allied;
May their lot be free from care!
When, the honeymoon once o'er,
They return from Thanet's shore,
Heaven grant that they enjoy
Happiness without alloy!

CURTAIN

English Country Life

THE life of the countryside has always been one of the well-springs of English art. To it we owe not only the great landscapes, sporting prints and conversation pieces, but all the traditional crafts of village, farm and cottage. The Loan Exhibition, which is being held until June 30th at 39, Grosvenor Square, mirrors British Country Life through the centuries in its representative collection of paintings, furniture, sporting equipment and objects of rural use and ornament. The proceeds of the Exhibition will be devoted to the National Trust, whose work for the preservation of England's natural and architectural beauty is too well known to need description.



"YES, THE DUKE AND I HAD ONE HELL OF A ROW THIS MORNING."

"No, I Won't Give You Anything Because—

I haven't any change
Charity Begins at Home
I do more than my share already
we pay enough in taxes
I don't know enough about it
if you once begin there's no end to it
I'm in rather a hurry
it's always left to us to clear up other people's messes
I think you'd do much better to get up a dance
I haven't any change
some people have their own ways of giving
I can't think who gave you my name
one would give to everything if one could
after all, what has it to do with me?
I don't like all this interference
I have so many calls on my purse
one doesn't know how it will be used
I don't approve of indiscriminate charity
I haven't any change
you people seem to think I'm made of money
it isn't as if it were just the one thing
I'm quite prepared to give, but I hate being pestered
the more you give the more they want
it's a question of principle
I've only just got enough to get home
in these hard times one has to think of Number One
that sort of thing ought to fall on the Government
you've chosen a very bad time to ask
I haven't any change
in my position one can't be too careful
it's all very sad but my little bit won't help
I don't believe in mixing money and friendship
I'm always prepared to let you use my name
people aren't really grateful
there's too much of this kind of thing already
I don't feel I can really approve
surely there are proper organisations
I do all my charity at Christmas
I haven't any change"

(*N.B.*—This isn't a poem.)

Evolution

THE horse is returning to us—but how?

By way of America and the microphone.

It is returning in a peculiar halting kind of rhythm, suggestive of a dot-and-go-one gait that would definitely damage its chances in any Point-to-Point.

But still, there it is. The horse is being featured in the world of jazz. Not perhaps as you or I in our sporting way would care to celebrate it; but then you and I and the horse probably all belong to the pre-jazz age, and our ideas—if we have any—are definitely bad.

The horse, instead of being sung about as fleet-footed or standing proudly by, is crooned about in a melancholy undertone expressive of shame and misery. And it is always frightfully old and slow. Sometimes its name is Old Faithful, and it's practically dying between the shafts.

It takes about six verses to die.

When the horse isn't actually dying the wheel of the waggon is broken, which doesn't, naturally, give the horse much of a chance to show what it can do.

At its very best and brightest, with presumably a complete and unbroken set of wheels behind it, the horse only jogs.

"My old horse an' waggon are jogging up the hill;
It's hard to tell when Dobbin moves and when he's standing still.
For forty years we've hit the trail and now he's failing fast,
But slowly crawling up the hill we'll all get home at last."

You recognise the kind of thing?

You and I and the horse, actually, may remember quite another state of affairs, concerned with carriages and polished harness and a pair of spanking bays stepping high—but naturally nobody's going to listen to *us*, especially as we don't croon.

If we did croon it might be something along rather futuristic lines. For instance, when all road-traffic has been superseded by air-traffic it will be the turn of the motor-car to reappear—a quaint, pathetic survival—in contemporary song; so why not let's get a few songs ready beforehand?

"The old eight-seater limousine that Grandpa used to drive
Has mouldered in the garage since nineteen-thirty-five.
There's lichen on the bonnet and the steering isn't true,
Yet still the old car takes the streets that Grandpa rattled through.
Come on, old car of mine!
Before you fall apart
I'll fix your dear old wheels with twine.
Come on, now, make a start!"

The equivalent, you perceive, of the kind of verse that the horse has to put up with nowadays.

And we needn't stop at that either. What about the olde-world touch?

"There's an old-fashioned shack down in Dixie I know
And the old-fashioned mother o' me,
And a rattling old car that is noisy and slow,
With a leak where the petrol should be.
And the roses all climb round the old garage-door
An' the oil lies in pools on the floor."

It follows to reason that all the other verses will tell of the singer's—or crooner's—urgent desire to go right back to his old-fashioned mother and still older-fashioned car.

Well, naturally.

Who wouldn't?

Just as you and I may sometimes feel that the horse of the old days was a good deal more picturesque than the car of the present ones—although not, of course, as devastatingly picturesque as the horse that the crooners croon about.

E. M. D.



". . . OR WE COULD MAKE *THIS* THE DINING-ROOM AND PUT YOUR CHEST-OF-DRAWERS IN THE KITCHEN."

Fleet Street Evenings

"Scheherazade," he admitted, "with the same ultimate object in view as my own—that of prolonging an earthly existence—adopted an opposite principle. Who is to blame either of us? She created for her market, as I do for mine. For her the vivid restlessness of continual variety; for me an artistry more careful, to suit the earnestness and responsibility of our age. Let us both be counted simply as story-tellers, though I am prepared to admit that in person she may have been the more beautiful.

"Now, what would you consider to be the market value of this story in Fleet Street to-day?"

He told me the story. I ventured the estimate that it would have been worth half-a-crown of *The London Gazette's* money at any time before they transferred the publication from Oxford and began to tighten things up.

"That remark is evidence of the unreliability of your sense of literary values. Out of that story in the last twelve months I have made—let me see"—he flicked over a little swatch of cuttings—"two guineas; one, two, three, four half-guineas; five shillings, half-a-crown and—oh, yes, I foolishly neglected to read the conditions—a Giant Two-pound Jar of Smahmit Brilliantine. Counting the brilliantine as a mere trophy of victory, say four pounds eleven-and-six."

He would not let me keep the cuttings. He said that his auditors needed them to enable them to make up his income-tax return. But here are a few from memory.

To-Night's Two-Guinea Prize Readers' Story of Empire

On Empire Day, 1908, I was stationed with my regiment at Goberibad in Southern India. The day had been swelteringly hot and the long ceremonial parade in the morning before thousands of deliriously-cheering natives had taxed our stamina to the utmost, so that most of us were content to spend the afternoon resting on our *badgerees*, or beds, listening to the swish of the *punkah*, a kind of manually operated communal native fan. In the early evening, however, I decided to walk down to the *bazaar*, as the market-place or bazaar is always called in India, to study the native population in its mood of festival gaiety. There I witnessed a little scene which has always seemed to me to typify completely the friendly clash of thoughts and feelings that must for ever go on between the thousand various races under our rule: all different yet all British. A gigantic Yudu headman from the hills, whose enormous height was matched only by his girth, seeing in a little shop a Union Jack of richly ornate native work which he wished to buy, attempted to enter the premises. Alas! the doorway was too narrow for his tremendous proportions. Twice, three times he made the attempt. Then, from the politely amused crowd that had gathered, came the voice of a little wizened *fakir*, or clergyman, from the lowlands of Pushcar. "*Wandy Kommatrah gangai, mutti-lal, kai sommararanjigut pirra-bhang bhohatra khar*" ("Try sideways"). Like a flash the Yudu giant turned on him. "*Majkhittmara-bo*," he retorted; which may be translated roughly as "Can you not see, O son of a dog, that I am completely rotund and that therefore no advantage could come of your suggestion." The shout of laughter which greeted this sally was so deafening that the officer commanding at Fort Albert, two miles distant, believing that a native rising was imminent, sent a heliograph message for reinforcements to Fort Gladstone. In fairness to him it should be said that when he



"Choose yer own bed, Cuthbert. My number is nine down, twenty-three across."



"What's the idea of having some larger than others?"

learnt the cause of his perturbation his laugh was as hearty as anyone's.

D. L——, late Maj., 7/9th Sopodgee Lancers.

SHE KNEW

You may think the following worth including in your laughable series of Cockney Humour Stories sent in by readers like myself. The other day I watched while a very fat old lady tried to get into one of the narrow entrances that they have at the ends of the coaches on the Bakerloo. An obliging porter, by dint of pushing, tried to help her, but it was no use. At last a man on the platform, annoyed at the delay, said to her, "Why don't you try sideways, Madam?" The old lady, heated from her efforts, looked at him despairingly. "Trouble is, Guv'nor, I ain't got no sideways."

SEASON TICKET HOLDER, *Kensal Green, N.W.*

ALL-ROUND EQUALITY IN THE ARMY.

If my husband had been alive I know he would have wanted to send you for your Laughter in the Trenches Stories the following true incident which he often used to delight to tell us when we asked him to tell us something funny that had happened to him in France, where he was for nearly four years, not counting two leaves and one wound. My husband was guarding a trench at the Front one morning during the War when a very fat General, whose name I have forgotten, came to inspect the troops. The trench had a dug-out with a very narrow door, so that when the General tried to go down it he found that he was so fat that he could not get in. Seeing his struggles, my husband saluted him and said, "Why don't you try sideways, General?" The General was a very hot-tempered man and he turned on my husband and said, "Use your —— eyes, Private! Where the —— —— do you see any sideways on me?" Fortunately at that moment a shell blew up the trench next-door so the matter was passed over.

ONLY A WOMAN,
Mon Arbri, Ilford.

"With sails bellowing in the wind competitors in the Thames Sailing Barge Race made a delightful picture."—*Daily Paper.*

More correctly, with the wind bellowing in the sails.

"The damning of the waters has almost literally caused the desert to blossom as a rose, and among the many growers engaged in the dried fruits industry are thousands of soldiers."—*Australian Paper.*

We see.



"I SUPPOSE YOU FREQUENTLY GET ASKED FUNNY QUESTIONS?"
"AY, AND WE FREQUENTLY GIVE DAM FUNNY ANSWERS."

Two Hearts

DEAREST, will you lead out trumps?
You see, I've got to live
And I'm heavily in debt.
Dearest, will you lead out trumps?
For each time I forgive
But next time you forget.
You look divine in pink
And you make the rest seem frumps,
But, darling, do you think
This time you'd lead out trumps?
On my behalf you'd earn the thanks
Of several of the leading banks,
So will you try once more?

Of course, my dear, I understand,
But *diamonds* were trumps this hand,
Hearts were the one before. M. H.

Silly Saws

SOMETIMES they are called proverbs, sometimes maxims or aphorisms, by some "wise saws," and by others (if they can spell it) apophthegms. However named, they are pithy and sententious sayings in which men of all nations have summed up their experience for the guidance of those that follow.

And, my hat, how sententious they are! Most of us use some proverb, apophthegm or whatnot every day. Many of us, acknowledging their wisdom, do not resent an occasional rebuke with a proverb or apowhatisit. The fellow who, seeing that we have failed at last in some protracted effort, mutters—

"There 's many a slip . . ."

or

"Don't run your head against a brick wall,"

even he can be endured—if we do not see him too often—because we feel the fool is right.

But to be confronted with the proverbs in mass-formation is chilling and alarming. I fell by chance into the pages of Proverbs—163 pages—in BENHAM'S admirable *Dictionary of Quotations*; and I have there been floundering for days, bogged in wisdom, stupefied with the miasmal vapours of smugness. To read in brief the collective wisdom of the world ought to give one a new respect for Man; but I have never had so low an opinion of the fellow. Oh, what a nasty superior little gnat he is! The proverb-maker reminds me of the "reasonable man" of Anglo-Saxon jurisprudence, the fellow who always does the right thing—and not too much of that. He is one who has had to give up sausages because of indigestion and is determined that nobody else shall enjoy a sausage; so he says pompously—

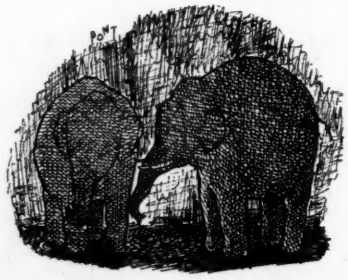
"Eat and drink measurely and defy the mediciners,"

or

"Wine hath drowned more men than the sea."

(In all these pages I have not found a single healthy saying that duly celebrates the pleasures of the belly, or even lets on that a good meal is not a bad thing.)

Yes, I can see this proverb-maker. He is the residual smug, the essential sheep, in the soul of Man, when all naughtiness and folly have been ejected and every temptation virtuously resisted. He has been so careful in all his dealings that he has been able to



"WHAT ABOUT YOU AND ME AND A LITTLE HOME ?"

retire to Wimbledon Common with a good many thousands in the gilt-edged securities: he always looked before he leaped (if indeed he ever went so far as to leap): he never counted his chickens before they were hatched: he has always known which side his bread was buttered (whatever that may mean): he fills in punctiliously the counterfoils of cheques, leaves no loose money about, is careful to step off the moving stairway with the left foot first; and, when he meets a man less shrewd and successful, all he has to say is—

"You have made your bed and now you must lie on it."

What an imbecile remark!

By the way, he never gets it quite right. According to BENHAM—though the imbecility is not much reduced—it runs—

"As you make your bed so you must lie on it."

And, by the way, I am glad to see that this fatuous and untrue saying is not peculiar to our race, but is current, in one form or another, among the French, the Spaniards, the Germans and the Danes.

Mr. ST. JOHN ERVINE, long ago, in one of his plays, pointed out that, however badly you have made your bed, there is not the smallest reason why you should not get up and make it again. And I would add that the sensible man will go on remaking his bed until he has made it satisfactorily.

What a message to the youth of the country, how little consonant with the traditions of our race, that, having made an initial bloomer, we can do nothing to correct it—indeed, it would be wrong to try!

And, mind you, the same clot of pomposity is quite capable of saying in the next breath—

"If at first you don't succeed, try, try again,"

or

"It's never too late to mend,"

or

"Try and trust will move mountains."

Those, at least, are sentiments that have more the ring of a Briton; but if try and trust will move mountains, it is reasonable to suppose that they may have some effect upon an ill-adjusted blanket.

I knew a young man who, by mistake, proposed to a young woman at a ball, and she, thinking that he had offered her something in aspic, accepted. I urged him to resolve the error and honourably cancel the match. But he could only murmur feebly, "No, I have made my bed, and I must lie on it."

That is the serious thing. You and I may think nothing of apophthingummies; but they are printed in books and recited by governesses, and many of the young receive them seriously and go through life muttering the magic formulæ in their hearts. And it is the melancholy, despairing, apprehensive sayings which survive most strongly, I suppose because they were devised by the mugwump at Wimbledon mentioned above. They do not breathe the spirit of the breed. DRAKE, if he had read this book, would have signalled to the Spaniards to land and carry on; LIVINGSTONE would never have started.

Therefore I think it my duty to instruct the young that where, at a crisis, some hoary saying seems to suggest a particular course of conduct, there is nearly always another saying which points in precisely the opposite direction. For example, you are offered an attractive job or opportunity of profit abroad. To accept it will mean leaving your beloved for six months or more. She is admired; she is merry: can you be sure that your love will survive so long a parting? You are



"I SHOULDN'T SAY THIS IN FRONT OF HER, BUT REALLY ELLEN'S IMPERSONATION OF THE CUCKOO IS A GREAT DEAL MORE REALISTIC THAN THE CUCKOO ITSELF."

young and without experience. Your mind flies automatically to the stored wisdom of the ancients, to the knee of your governess, to the texts in your copy-book; and you remember the saying—almost a proverb now—of the poet CLOUGH that

"Out of sight is out of mind."

You tremble. She will forget you once you cease to prance before her and badger her with flowers. You will lose her. You decide. You refuse the job. She asks you why. You tell her. She is furious—and how right! She reproaches you for lack of faith. You have a row. You do lose her. Poor fool. You have been led astray by the ancients, as we so often are. But it is your own fault; for if you had looked through this swamp of proverbs you might have found another saying by the poet BAYLY, that

"Absence makes the heart grow fonder."

Then you would have taken the job and got the girl as well. What a pity!

But the general conclusion is cheering, that all these poisonous formulæ have antidotes. And in our next powerful lecture we shall expose some more.

EXERCISE

When did Mr. GLADSTONE use these words:—

"Great talkers are little doers"?

A. P. H.



"GEE, AUNTIE! THAT'S SWELL—NOW SWING IT."

Bondage

MY neighbour's son sells eggs. I can't quite remember how it comes about, but anyway things of this kind come about very easily nowadays. And because he is my neighbour's son and a gentleman, I buy the eggs. How it works out, according to my cook, is that the eggs are smaller and rather more expensive than other people's. Why it works out like this is of course because he is my neighbour's son and a gentleman. He drives up with the eggs on Thursday evenings. He wears a distinguished suit of plus-fours and has a perfect technique for entering the kitchen and counting eggs out of a basket into a little basin held by my cook. It does not embarrass him in the least, but it embarrasses her slightly, and she is beginning to feel that we do not eat quite enough eggs. However, if a boiling-fowl happens to be left over at the end of the round she naturally gives a home to it, although as a family we are not so awfully keen on boilers.

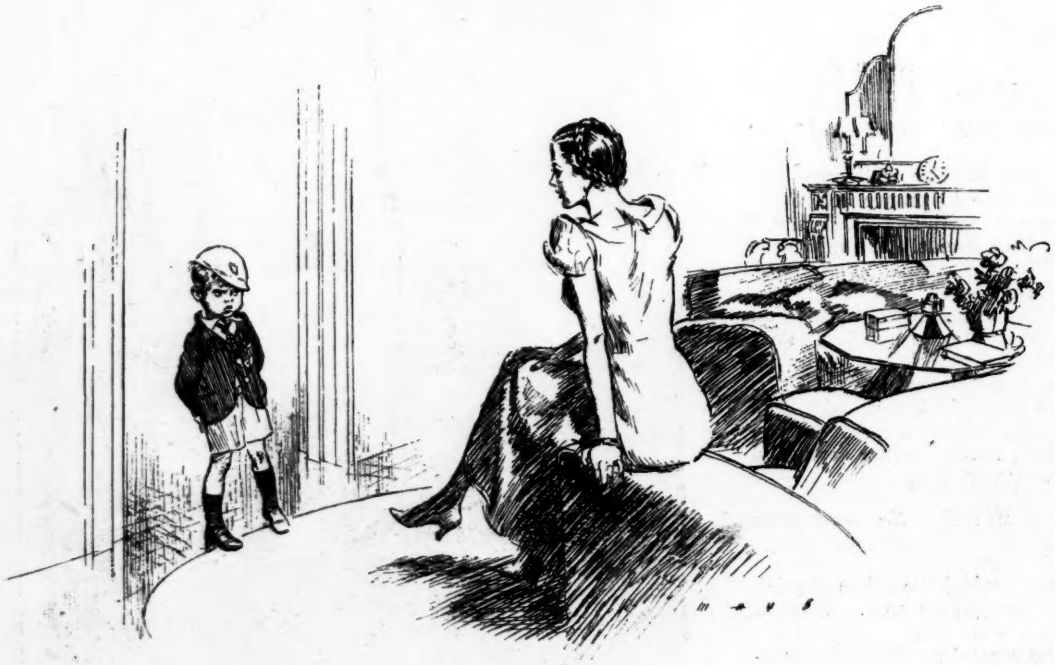
I sometimes meet my neighbour's son about the house on Thursday evenings, and he joins me in the drawing-room for a glass of sherry. He has a particularly graceful and a particularly leisurely manner over a glass of sherry. Last Thursday he came to look for me in the drawing-room himself, and I could see that he had something important to say to me. "I am moving into Hampshire next month," he told me solemnly, "and I shall not be able to get up to town of a Thursday." My heart gave a great leap, but in a second he had sunk it again. "Captain Castaway is taking over my round from me. . . . A very nice fellow. . . ." He paused and cleared his throat slightly, "Of course a gentleman."

Smith Minor Scores Again.

Q. "Give an example of a heroic couplet."
A. "Romeo and Juliet."

Astronomers' Corner

"In its journey around the sun, the earth travels at the rate of 1,112 1, and will continue for 11 months."—*Toronto Paper.*



"WHAT DID YOU LEARN TO-DAY?"
"I LEARNT THAT 5 AND 4 DON'T MAKE 8."

I'm The Perfect English Butler

I STARTED as a buttons at the Marquis,
But found the pay ridiculously small,
So I made an application for another situation
And became a second-footman at the Hall;
And after that I buttled for his Lordship
In monumental splendour at The Towers;
But in spite of this position I possessed a great ambition
To increase my meagre monetary powers—
So I sailed across to Hollywood to make another start
And very soon I found myself contributing to Art.

I'm the Perfect English Butler on the Transatlantic screen;
My manners are a model and my bearing is serene;
I've a Perfect English Accent which directors love to hear
When I wait on Mr. ARLISS—or a Metro-Goldwyn peer.
I hover round the table while Miss LOY and Mr. GABLE
Are wittily discussing married life;
To Miss TEMPLE I am rather like a patronising father—
And I've asked Miss ZASU PITTS to be my wife.
I'm the Perfect English Butler whom the picture-fan admires,
But although I work in Hollywood my heart is in the Shires.

I've always been accustomed to Society,
And I'm not ashamed to say that I'm a snob;
When the conversation touches on a viscount or a duchess
I am really quite revolted by "the mob."
There's not of course the bluest blood in Hollywood,
But the place is quite a paradise for me,
For they're one and all emphatic that I'm "most ar*i*stocratic"—
A fact which fills my English heart with glee.
I sometimes have a craving for a pukka English peer,
But he isn't so attractive as ten thousand pounds a year!

I'm the Perfect English Butler, but I've left my native land
And to see me it will cost you two-and-sixpence at The Grand;
I've the Perfect English Gift for not displaying what I think—
You've only got to watch me as I circulate the drink.
To every lesser menial I'm just but never genial—
Unusual in these democratic days;
But I glow with satisfaction if some thoughtful little action
Is rewarded by a baroness's praise.
Oh, I started on a pound a week for answering the phone,
And now I have a mansion *and a butler of my own.*



BLUM GOES "NAP."

"ALLONS, LES FRANCS DE LA PATRIE,
LE JOUR DE GLOIRE EST ARRIVÉ."

The "Marseillaise" adapted.

Impressions of Parliament

Synopsis of the Week

***Monday, June 14th.*—Commons: Debate on Education.**

***Tuesday, June 15th.*—Lords: Debate on Ministers' Salaries.**

Commons: Factories Bill discussed on Report.



THE TORCH OF LEARNING

[Mr. LINDSAY advocates a movement for intellectual development on the same lines as the Physical Training campaign.]

***Wednesday, June 16th.*—Lords: Debate on Naval Fuel.**

Commons: Factories Bill taken again.

Monday, June 14th.—A map of England which indicates with appropriate colours the varying ferocity of local benches towards delinquent motorists will soon have to be produced, unless magistrates take more trouble to arrive at something like uniformity of penalty. To ask that they should do so is not to ask for any greater leniency. Last week Mr. Justice GODDARD commented adversely on the way in which some benches endorsed driving-licences almost automatically while others rarely endorsed at all; and this afternoon Sir JOHN MELLOR wondered if the Home Office had noticed these comments and intended taking steps. Mr. LLOYD explained that, beyond sending out a circular exhortation which had been despatched last September, the Home Office was powerless in the matter. It is for magistrates themselves to rectify a fault which so closely affects their reputation.

The debate on the Vote for the Board of Education showed a growing recognition that, for purposes of examination, children's minds are still being overloaded with facts which are subsequently of not the slightest use to them, and that this cannot possibly be called education.

The new Parliamentary Secretary, Mr. KENNETH LINDSAY, told the House that the Board was doing its best to find a method of selection which would cut out cramming, and that a report had recently been received on home-work which recommended its abolition for children under twelve in elementary schools. He also spoke of reorganisation which was progressive, although retarded by dilatory local authorities, and of a medical service doing excellent work but still short of staff; and finally he urged the need of a widespread movement to develop the minds of the people, as a counterpart to the development of their bodies which was the object of the new Physical Training Scheme. To such a movement he considered local experiment vital.



A COLD DOUCHE

SIR SAMUEL HOARE: "DRAT THE DOG! WISH I'D NEVER BROUGHT HIM INTO THE HOUSE!"

[*Adapted from the drawing by CARAN D'ACHE.*]

Mr. LEES-SMITH, condemning the system by which a child's academic future was decided by examination at the age of eleven, pointed out that amongst many famous people who had happened to be backward at that age were CHARLES DARWIN, HENRY FORD and Mr. CHURCHILL; in an admirable speech Mr. PICKTHORN attacked official *décor* and suggested that if the connection between art and industry was to be taken seriously, as Mr. LINDSAY had inferred, then it was time the Office of Works stopped buying terrible Oriental carpets of nauseating colour for Government Departments, for otherwise, he said, it was a mere parody of economy to teach children design.



SHAKESPEARE REVISED

"If this country was going to wage what he might call a League war against all other countries then we should find ourselves in an impossible position."—*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION on Imported Oil Fuel for the Navy.*

Tuesday, June 15th.—The Lords debated the Ministers of the Crown Bill, which revises Ministers' salaries, and Lord SALISBURY took exception to its reference to the Prime Minister as First Lord of the Treasury. He explained that he had known a P.M. very intimately (his father) who had not held the second office, and he saw no reason why the P.M. should be debarred by statute from being a member of the Upper House. Nor did Lord HAILSHAM, but he pointed out that since the First Lord had often been a Peer (Lord ROSEBERY as recently as 1894) the Bill would have no such effect.

The Government came worse out of the Commons' debate on the Factories Bill than the new Home Secretary, Sir SAMUEL HOARE. He had undertaken to act as nurse to this infant at short notice, and could hardly be blamed for a new clause, dealing with compulsory facilities for washing after work, which left loopholes for the bad



"I REGRET, MY LORD, THAT OWING TO A DEPARTMENTAL ERROR YOU HAVE BEEN BESIEGING THE WRONG CITY."

employer. As might surely have been foreseen, this was swooped on by the Government's supporters as well as by the Opposition, for the Bill's standards may be operative for the next twenty or thirty years. The most telling speeches were those of Miss WILKINSON, who championed the right of all workers, and particularly women, to go home looking their best, and of Mr. HERBERT WILLIAMS, who clinched the matter by demanding in what form of industry it was impossible to provide a basin, a jug, a piece of soap and a towel? Wisely Sir SAMUEL withdrew the clause and promised a fresh one which would give general compulsion while reserving to his Office the power of exemption, though in what conceivable cases this could be necessary he did not divulge.

Mr. BANFIELD, one of the elders of the Opposition, who speaks with the utmost sincerity and yet with humour, is always assured of the attention of the House; and he demolished the case for night-baking so completely that Conservative Members who followed him agreed that it must go. The HOME SECRETARY, declaring his mind open on this subject, reminded the House that the Alness Committee would report on it in a few days, and so for the moment it was shelved.

Wednesday, June 16th.—The merits of oil and coal as alternative fuels for the Navy were thrashed out, not for the first time, in the Lords this afternoon; and oil had it easily, in spite of the lack of adequate natural supplies either in the Dominions or the British Isles.



OUR BACK BENCH *WHO'S WHO*

The plank on which Mr. REMER stood
Really was wood.
He is a director of a record number of boards,
Being one of our timber-loards.

Lord AILWYN, who asked that the Fleet should be capable of burning either fuel, emphasised the ease with which oil supplies could be cut off in time of war and also the rival claims of the R.A.F. (which no one has yet suggested should change over to coal).

Technically he was answered by Lord HOWE, who explained that oil was in every way a more efficient fuel; and strategically by Lord STANHOPE, who told him that, apart from America and the U.S.S.R., every other major maritime Power was in the same condition of dependence on foreign wells as we were, and that, unless this country took on the world, oil should always be obtainable.

In the House of Commons on May 31, the Marquess of DONEGALL was mentioned by the FOREIGN SECRETARY as having been concerned with other British subjects in an attempt to purchase arms in Finland for Brazil or elsewhere. The Marquess of DONEGALL has since then stated that he went to Finland merely in his capacity as a journalist, and his disclaimer has been accepted by Mr. EDEN.

Mr. Punch naturally regrets that the mistake received publicity in his "Impressions of Parliament" of June 9.



ASCOT MIXTURE

At the Play

"THE KING'S PIRATE" (ST. MARTIN'S)

WHOEVER goes to St. Martin's Theatre to see *The King's Pirate* will be rewarded by one of the most superb exhibitions of acting which the London stage has seen for a long time —Mr. WILFRID LAWSON'S portrayal of *James I.* Everything is there, the sly intelligence, the timidity, the degrading pleasures, the underlying force of character and touch of majesty. So real is *James* that, although everything the dramatist shows us about him is base, we cannot but grow fond of him as the evening advances, and we take leave of him playing peep-bo with the decorous and astonished Spanish Ambassador and the less decorous and quite unsurprised *"Steenie" Villiers* (Mr. KENNETH VILLIERS) with a regret only tempered by the clear realisation that once we have seen this performance it will not perish from our memories.

KING JAMES always was the undoing of poor Sir WALTER RALEGH, and never more than in this play. It is in the Hampton Court scenes that the story comes to life and that the figures are whole-hearted creatures of flesh and blood, while the scenes which recapitulate the story of Sir WALTER RALEGH'S last voyage to the Orinoco somehow misfire. Mr. WYNDHAM GOLDIE'S *Ralegh* is a dignified enough figure, but we are never able to enter into his thoughts or his feelings, and we cannot tell from this play whether he really expected to find a particular gold-mine. He talks with easy dignity with his enemies in the King's Council, with his lieutenants in the *Enterprise*, with his family, but at the moment of crisis and failure he is a man stricken with fever, insufficiently in command of himself.

It is all a little depressing, and the play, which really ends when the *King* makes an offering of *Ralegh* to Spain, is drawn out through a narrative representation of *Ralegh's* trial and last hours. In these last hours the *Dean of Westminster* comes to offer his services. In another setting Mr. AUBREY DEXTER'S very finished and subtle stage clergyman would give a good deal of entertainment, but this is not the occasion for humour at the expense of clerical intonations. The trouble is that if we are not to see a conflict between a fussy and tactless prelate and the calmly heroic soul of the condemned *Ralegh* there is no particular point in the scene. It would perhaps improve this play if it were curtailed in the Third Act and expanded in the First to give the audience more of a picture of what RALEGH had been under ELIZABETH. There is in this First Act an attractive picture of *Henry Prince of Wales* (Mr. MORAN CAPLAT), who is shown to us as *Robert Cecil* (Mr. PETER RIDGEWAY) is shown to us, visiting the prisoner, the prince to work for his release, the statesman to tighten his confinement. Within the year both prince and statesman will be dead, and the knowledge gives a dramatic interest to everything they say and plan.



THE KING BETRAYS HIS PIRATE

James, King of England . . . . MR. WILFRID LAWSON
Diego, Ambassador of Spain . . MR. ANTHONY IRELAND

A familiar schoolboy howler records of JAMES I. that he was very dirty in that he never washed and married ANNE of Denmark. Miss HELEN GOSS shows us an *Anne of Denmark* of singular freshness but enjoying little authority with the *King*, whose affections are a law to themselves. We get glimpses, in the meetings of the Privy Council and the angry speeches of the leaders of the anti-Spanish Party like *Archbishop Abbot* (Mr. STEPHEN JACK), of the high politics of the time, and behind the royal buffooneries and shamelessness we can discern the lines of a highly intelligent policy which it was *Ralegh's* misfortune to embarrass.

D. W.



THE FALLEN STAR

Sir Walter Ralegh . . MR. WYNDHAM GOLDIE

"TO HAVE AND TO HOLD" (HAYMARKET)

I wonder if the gipsy ever warned Miss DOROTHY HYSON against dark men in self-propelled bath-chairs? It begins to look as if her theatrical path is to be studded with them, for she has now bagged a brace in two years. The other was in *Ringmaster*, a very uneven effort of Mr. KEITH WINTER'S with a good deal to be said for it, though it only ran a week. There is all the difference in treatment between that play and this, for where it was unrestrainedly melodramatic this is played on a subdued note, broken only by a rare outburst; but there is a similarity of theme in that both deal with the relations of a man of dominant character, newly crippled, with his wife and his wife's lover. I am not, of course, suggesting any plagiarism whatever, but it is interesting to compare the two. The First Act of

Ringmaster was an effective statement, from which the play tailed away into a muddle. In this play the opposite happens, and, after two Acts bordering on the dull, Mr. LIONEL BROWN pulls out a Third which fully seizes the attention.

Brian Harding (Mr. KENETH KENT), a sound fellow in most respects, had two ambitions, to found a family in the territorial sense and to prove that a farm in England could be made to pay by the application of science. His father had made the necessary money, and *Brian* had taken the first step by buying the ancient estate of the *de Winters* and marrying one of them, *June* (Miss MARIE NEY). At the beginning of the play she has just decided to run away with *Brian's* cousin from America, *Max* (Mr. HARTLEY POWER); but everything is altered when *Brian* is thrown from a horse and condemned indefinitely to a wheeled-chair.

Max stays on to help *Brian* to run his farm, and with a rapidity which does neither of them credit he and *June* become lovers. But he is a good bailiff, and too good for the *de Winter* relations, who, resenting his cold chemical attitude to their broad acres, find that he has a daughter by a discarded marriage, and maliciously introduce her into *Brian's* house.

The result is not the minor scandal they had hoped for; but *Peggy* (Miss DOROTHY HYSON) discovers the relationship between her father and *June* and brings matters to such a head by furiously threatening to tell *Brian*, that *Max* prepares to leave *June* and England.

Brian, however, knows already and breaks to *Peggy* the secret that he has only a short time to live, explaining to her that he is going to be selfish enough to insist on *Max* and *June* staying with him, happily, to the end.

This last Act is written with great sympathy and I think it rings true. It was beautifully acted by Mr. KENT, whose whole interpretation was first-class, and by Miss HYSON, who improves and improves. Their partnership was the best thing of the evening. That of Miss NEY and Mr. POWER was only sometimes effective; Miss NEY failed to drive home the full urgency of *June's* situation, and there was something a little monotonous in Mr. POWER's performance, though it was neither his fault nor that of Miss HYSON that the promising scene of a daughter unearthing a young father was not entirely successful. The Author and the Producer—though elsewhere in the play Miss IRENE HENTSCHEL'S touch was admirable—might have done more with it on less unemotional lines. *Max* seemed human enough in other respects.

Broad relief was contributed by Miss MIGNON O'DOHERTY and Mr. BASIL RADFORD as the loud horsey dregs of an ancient stock. They were good, but there was too much of them. As the *Butler* Mr. RICHARD WARNER looked so like Mr. H. W. AUSTIN that I waited keenly for the absent-minded moment in which he would serve his irascible master with a double-fault instead of a double-brandy. But in vain, alas! ERIC.



WEIGHTING AN ARGUMENT WITH LEAD

Brian Harding . . . . . MR. KENETH KENT
Peggy Harding . . . . . MISS DOROTHY HYSON



BLOOD SPORTS DISCUSSING A HUMANE GIN

Robert de Winter . . . . . MR. BASIL RADFORD
Roberta de Winter . . . . . MISS MIGNON O'DOHERTY

Foundling

SURELY a pretty foundling lies
Cradled below this hedge entangled,
And smiles to bland and smiling skies,
So glamorously the dew is spangled.
Who but the pitying fairies deft and wise
White-belled convolvulus have dangled
About its canopy, magically stayed
The hips and haws in coral-line cascade
To burn through hanging worlds of jade?
And these first few of yellowed leaves,
Patines of gold, as small
And thin as guineas in the fist of thieves,
Are neither coins nor leaves at all:
They are the sweetest fairy boons,
These crinkled old Apostle-spoons.

"Jesus College, winners of the Cambridge Mays, are sure to go for the Grand at Henley. It is not yet certain whether Trinity Hall and Clare will follow them or be content with the Ladies."—*Evening Paper.*

How about tossing up?

Bury the Axis

I DON'T see how I can go on much longer without knowing what the word "axis" means in political articles and speeches.

However, I am letting it go as long as I can. I know very well that when I admit that I understand the word "axis" as it is used by politicians they will take it as a gesture of friendliness and encouragement on my part.

"He's getting on," they will say. "Yes, I know he's slow, but he seems to be trying. We'll give him one a little bit harder next time."

And within a couple of days I shall find someone writing about the Paris-Tokyo asymptote.

I profoundly disapprove of this tendency to geometrise or Euclidify political metaphor. For years and years we have all been happy with natural phenomena; they may have been exotic, like the unobservant ostrich, or homely, like the explored avenue, but they have nearly all been as concrete as the turned stone. Of course there have been spheres of influence, well-informed circles, square deals and lines of least resistance, but at a pinch—and it generally was a pinch—we could think of those as concrete too. But an axis! What can you do with an axis? It's like trying to grasp a stick of treacle.

The essence of political metaphor—correct me if I am wrong, but don't imagine that it will make any difference—the essence, I say, of political metaphor is to make an idea more impressive and more memorable by presenting it to the senses as well as to the mind. Now the word "axis" doesn't present any idea to the senses until you try to translate it in some way.

I admit that this statement is debatable. A friend with whom I was talking about this business objected most strongly.

"Mention the word 'axis,'" he said, staring at me with piercing eyes, "and immediately you bring all my senses into play. I see GEORGE WASHINGTON."

"Who?" I said anxiously, rummaging among the rulers of Europe.

"GEORGE WASHINGTON. I feel grass under my feet. I smell the odour of cut wood. I hear," said my friend with incredible effrontery, "a voice saying, 'Father, I cannot tell a lie. I did it with my little axis.'"

"What do you taste?" I asked coldly. "Cherries?"

He said, No, fried chicken.

You can see that as a member of a politician's audience this acquaintance of mine is a total loss. I said as much—indeed, more—to him. "That's no way to think," I said.

He persisted: "Quite apart from the fact that the habit of association by similars, or as it is now more often called, free association, reveals—Professor W. MCDOUGALL has said so—a higher and more complex type of mind——"

"This is politically irrelevant."

"All higher types of mind are politically irrelevant. They are the chaff; the stolid voter is the grain."

"We were discussing the word 'axis,'" I said after a pause. "Remember?"

"Ah, yes. The little, nameless, unremembered axis, of——"

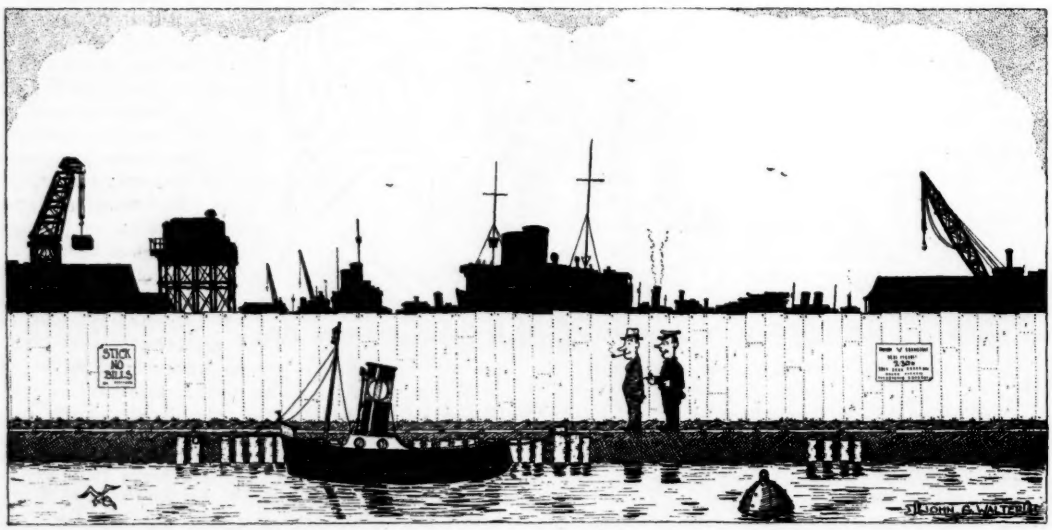
I went away.

The fact remains that on an ordinary mind the word "axis" makes no useful impression. For all the good it does there might just as well be no metaphor there at all.

When Mr. CHURCHILL writes an article, as he did about a dozen days ago in *The Evening Standard*, on the Berlin-Rome axis, I see perfectly well what he means; but I'm blowed if I see what the word signifies in itself. What the blazes *does* it signify in itself?

Don't tell me. The question is rhetorical as well as rude. The grimness of the tenacity with which, for the reasons mentioned earlier, I am hanging on to my ignorance for fear of what, if I dissipate it, I shall instantly be called upon to understand, is extreme.

(If you don't get that sentence, read it again. It took me about a quarter of an hour to get it myself, and I don't see why I should be the only one working round here. I had to put all the commas in too.)



"WHAT'S THE TINY TUG FOR?"
"SHIPPING COMPANIES USE IT FOR PHOTOGRAPHS. MAKES THE GIANT LINERS LOOK BIGGER."



"AND WILL YOU PLEASE WRITE IT IN BLOOD?"

I admit that there is a strong case for replacing a political phrase when it seems to be getting worn. Thus I take it that "axis" is now doing duty instead of "rapprochement" (which always used to give me a vague impression of a couple of nebulæ, labelled according to circumstances, converging with a loud whooshing sound, and probably used to make my friend think of RUPPRECHT of Bavaria) or something of that kind. But that doesn't make me like it any better. If this is the type of replacement we are going to be offered, I say stick to the old phrases. Things have come to a pretty pass when you have to understand the metaphor with the help of the context instead of the other way round. How many people are going to understand it the first time that the volcano hon. members opposite are sitting on, or the fools' paradise they are living in, is called a nest of quaternions or the square root of *minus* one? On whose misguided example will the less straightforward conceptions of Professor EINSTEIN first be dragged in to obfuscate discussion of Clause 15 in the Shouting Upwards Reservoir, Waterworks and Bandstand Drainage (Illumination) Scheme Bill, 1937?

As for the Berlin-Rome axis, at the end of this article Mr. CHURCHILL as good as said that he thought it was far from being achieved, and I gathered this was because of the two important facts he had earlier declared were gritting at its hub. Now I can stand just so much, but when it comes to an axis which must be presumed to be non-existent because if it did exist something would be gritting at its hub, I give up. Leave me alone to play with my dear old toys—the ship of state, the white elephant, the rabbit, the hat and the thin end of the wedge.

R. M.

The Irish River

Now wakens the county
To Springtime's rich bounty,
The martins are back over Heggarty's mill,
While all down the river
New life is a-quiver
From burnhead to barmouth, by reed-bed and rill—
First birling
And swirling
By peat-bog and heather,
Then purling sedately through ploughland and lea,
Till, kissed by the raindrops of April's pert weather,
She finds the grey sea.

So lively, so sprightly,
Bedad! she looks rightly,
A dipper to dance her a jig as she goes;
Through woods of wild cherry,
By ford and by ferry,
Past flax-dam and creeper-clad cabin she flows.
All hustle
And bustle,
Her moods have no matching;
Yet, though she's so busy, she finds time to say,
"Get out the old greenheart, the mayfly are hatching.
Come, make it a day."

G. C. N.

Dorcas Re-Enters

I THOUGHT I had finished with the story of Dorcas; but I was wrong. There is still more to tell.

It seems that the blue-tits whom we heard discussing the bird-box in the apple-tree, and deciding that the activities of a recently-imported cat would prevent them from again occupying this residence, so desirable and eligible and all the rest of it, changed their minds. Having brought up a family or two in the bird-box during the previous spring, and having been very happy there, they came to the conclusion that Dorcas's attentions should be disregarded or defied.

"After all," as the father said, "the box is tightly secured to the trunk, and the hole at the top is very small, and as the brood will be a few inches below it, it would require a very long paw to get them out, and greater strength than this Dorcas person has to drag the box down. And you and I are agile enough to keep out of the way whenever she is up in the branches. In this precarious world, you know, risks must be run."

"Quite right, dear," said his mate; and so, to my simple surprise and complex delight, the neglected box was again frequented and preparations for the youthful tits became constant: my delight being complex because I knew from Dorcas's other depredations how keen and inspired a hunter she was, and how fond of climbing trees, and how far she goes beyond reasonable expectation. Already she had torn down three nests, a blackbird's, a starling's and a wren's, so that when, the other day, a week or so after the conversations which I have reported, I saw her, thus fulfilling our worst forebodings, actually in the apple-tree, investigating the bird-box, in which it was common knowledge that there were now young ones—sniffing at it and patting it and anticipating the feast maturing within and reflecting how well it was worth waiting for—I uttered the verdict: "Dorcas must go." And I added, "If necessary, there must be mice. Indeed, let there be mice, for Dorcas must go!"

Speech, it has been stated, is silver, silence is golden. But speech and silence are not the alternatives which in everyday life are most commonly confronted. The commonest alternatives are speech and action, and it was so in the present case. All very well for me to say, "Dorcas must go;" but how, and where? Either, it was decided, she must be presented to somebody living a long way off, or she must be boarded out until the nesting-season was over. The project may sound simple to you, but, surveying my career as the purchaser of things which, immediately I have bought them, have lost not only all commercial value but any value even as gifts, I had grave doubts. I am one who has always been able to acquire but never to unload; and I could not forget it.

Yet if we were to retain birds, Dorcas must go; and she was therefore packed in a basket and sent forth on her travels. During a whole morning she was driven from one likely abode to another, in this village and that, the range of possible new owners comprising a station-master and a post-mistress. But none of them could accommodate her. It was useless for Dorcas's amazing agility, which has become the talk of the countryside, to be praised, or her deadliness with mice extolled: none of them could accommodate her. "But we've already got a mouser," this one said; and that, "My husband's set his face against cats;" and another, "If it had only been last week!" And so, at lunch-time, back came the basket with Dorcas inside it.

"Very well, then," I said, "she shall go to the dealer I bought her from and stay there as a lodger till August"—and that afternoon Dorcas was replaced in the basket and driven fifteen miles to the original fancier's, who, I assumed, would recall the sale of such an extraordinary animal and be more than ready to regain her companionship on weekly terms. But, forgetting how dense is the curtain that can fall directly a bargain has been concluded, I was mistaken: the fancier first denied that he had ever seen the cat before—the cat which, so recently, he had sold me for half-a-crown—and then he named as a fair price for its board and lodging five shillings a week. To anyone else I might have been willing to give this, but not to a man nourishing such disparity of financial views.

"No," I said firmly as Dorcas was again transferred to her basket. "No, she shall go back. It is the finger of Fate. She shall go back and be more strictly guarded until the nesting season is over."

So back she came, having, as the cook genially said, "beaten us," and here she will stay, behind (I hope) wire-netting until there are no more young birds: the same Dorcas, I thought sadly, who, on her arrival, had been scrupulously subjected to the buttering of feet lest she should leave the place. Good butter wasted!

E. V. L.

Humour, 2037

"PERHAPS the saddest feature of that memorable year 2037," said Sir Wyse Craque in his *Thousand Years of Laughter*, "was the entire failure of the joke-supply. For years it had been obvious that the earth's supply of funny stories was becoming worked-out. New jokes had been becoming rarer and rarer, and the stock that had braved a thousand years the battle and the breeze was wearing extremely thin.

"The Government in 2037 became seriously alarmed, and a Royal Commission was appointed which made a report which only served to confirm the gravity of the situation. 'All the best humorists have long ago left the profession,' ran the report, 'and started afresh in less hazardous branches of industry. The few humorous writers and public entertainers who continue to attempt to amuse are mostly charlatans, serving up old jokes very thinly disguised as new ones. We suggest that the only hope for the joke industry is a substantial Government subsidy.'

"The Labour Party opposed the subsidy on the grounds that most of it would go to vested interests such as publishers and editors and that very little of the money would trickle through to the humorists themselves, who were not able to afford vests, but the subsidy was granted and in due course a prize of £10,000 was offered for the best new joke submitted to the Advisory Council, on which many public-spirited gentlemen served, including the Archbishop of Canterbury, the President of the M.C.C., the Governor of the Bank of England, the Secretary of the Lord's Day Observance Society, the Chairman of the Licensed Victuallers' Association, the Editor of *The Poultry-Keepers' Gazette*, two working men from the Depressed Areas and the Curator of the British Museum.

"The sufferings of the Committee were intense, and resignations were frequent, but as each member dropped out another filled his place. As usual in times of National Emergency England proved to have no dearth of men of courage and pertinacity. But of the first 1,263,469 jokes submitted not one was new. And then, like a bolt from the blue, came the rumour that a plumber in Leeds had died of laughing, and a representative of the Committee went North in a specially chartered plane to investigate.

"Relatives of the deceased said that the plumber had died at the house of



"No, Sir, we're not on the telephone. You see, customers would ring up and make appointments."

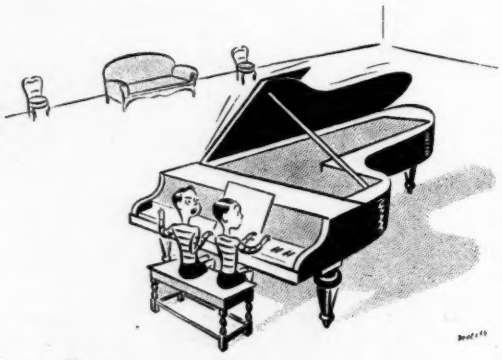
one Joshua Smith, a well-known and highly respected maker of braces. Joshua Smith had never been known to make a joke, but the indefatigable Committee-man called on him and asked him to repeat the joke that had killed the plumber, and Joshua did so. It was fortunate that the Committee-man had a strong constitution or he would not have survived long enough to die in hospital. Even as it was he only lived long enough to confirm the fact that Joshua had discovered a new joke. He tried to repeat it as life ebbed away, but each time he started he immediately relapsed into a prolonged fit of terrible laughter. Four more Committee-men waited in turn on Joshua Smith. Three died immediately without a struggle, and the fourth succumbed in the ambulance on the way to hospital.

"Eventually it was suggested that Joshua should commit the joke to paper, the idea being that the Committee could then uncover one word at a time, thus breaking the shock gently. This admirable scheme was defeated by the fact that just before he sat down to his desk to put the joke on paper Joshua for the first time saw the point of it himself. He was found pen in hand and stone cold a few hours later.

"Luckily war was declared in October, and the joke industry was revived by the resuscitation of the many excellent quips that had lain dormant since 1914–18."

The Dollar Goes Up.

"For many years the Federal Reserve Banks have been experimenting with an 'asset currency' based on well-secured commercial bombs."—*Sunday Paper.*



"CHANGE DOWN, SYDNEY—SHE'S KNOCKING."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Biological Fiction

TIME was when Mr. H. G. WELLS was content to write fascinating stories which contained a modicum of instruction, for something of the schoolmaster strain must have been implanted in him at birth. And these attempts at improving the race to which he belonged he would buttress from time to time with collections of essays and confessions of faith that had in them no fiction at all. Perhaps he found that these essays failed to reach the standard of popularity attained by his novels, and so conceived the idea of putting more and more of his pet theories into his fiction and thereby reaching a wider public. For our author is now obviously far more interested in his views than in his tale. Here, for example, in *Star Begotten* (CHATTO AND WINDUS, 6/-) we have a slender tome dealing with practically the same topic as one of his earliest successes. A Martian invasion—but in how different a manner! He has got a long way now from *The War of the Worlds*—so far that one of the characters affects to forget whether that story was by JULES VERNE or CONAN DOYLE. This is not a physical invasion, but a bombardment with cosmic rays, by which the modern Martians hope to stimulate the human race at birth. And there is an amount of scientific discussion in this small volume that may possibly affright some ancient admirers. Let them take heart! The old story-teller can still do the old game when his theories allow him. His rapid sketch of *Mr. Joseph Davis's* youth, his thumb-nail portraits of the two Press peers and their henchmen, are quite in his best style. But no doubt some will complain that the proportion of amusement to instruction is lower than it was in the old days.

Grenville of the *Revenge*

Dissociating himself almost entirely from the ideals of the greedy and vulgar squirearchy which threw up the buccaneers, Mr. A. L. ROWSE has produced, in *Sir Richard Grenville* (CAPE, 12/6), the finest historical biography to be issued for many a long day. Mercifully perhaps—though the historian courteously deplores the lack—there is no material for psychology or pseudo-psychology. GRENVILLE was a man of (usually violent) action; and when he seeks to explain himself—as he does when cornered in some piece of exceptionally uncondonable piracy—his recorded utterances are mainly apologetic and very largely untruthful. It is the life that tells, and the biographer's well-meditated estimate of an age the problems of whose rapacity are still with us. His narrative is delightful to read; and GRENVILLE marches to the dramatic end so tactfully bowdlerised by TENNYSON, *viâ* a youthful manslaughter, great schemes and feats of buccaneering and piracy, plantations in Virginia and Munster, and the domestic activities of a politically Protestant sheriff among recusant and Puritan neighbours. His chronicle is packed with plums of enterprising research, of which Spanish versions of the engagements immortalised by HAKLUYT are at once the rarest and the most fascinating.

Princetown Picnic

The impish god of pure nonsense has so far taken possession of Mr. EDEN PHILLPOTTS that, with Princetown for the dark heart of his story and the moor for its scene of action, he has provided the merriest and most irresponsible of midsummer nightmares. For there is something a trifle nightmarish about this Devon comedy of errors which opens with a picnic—decorously deriving from a vicarage—on which impinges an escaped convict. *Sir Victor Bunn* is no usual convict. He is the genuine brand of a type too often adulterated: a philanthropist with a sentimental interest in the savings of the unwary poor. Unluckily his acumen is not equal to his intentions; a scampish partner leaves him in the lurch; and *Sir Victor* finds himself (1) doing time on Dartmoor, (2) escaping in a fog, (3) cowering in the umbrageous background of the aforesaid picnic. What allies and what opponents he discovers among the *Reverend Tudor*, the *Reverend's* strong-minded sister, his niece, her *fiancé* and his adorable "general," *Nancy Twitchett*, it would be unbecoming to reveal. It is enough to say that there are strong reasons for including *Farce in Three Acts* (HUTCHINSON, 7/6) among the portable effects of a care-free holiday.

Coral Island

Mr. W. TOWNEND, in *They Crossed the Reef* (CHAPMAN AND HALL, 7/6), tells yet another story of those Cardiff steamboatmen of whom he always writes with so much knowledge and insight. The cargo-steamer *Fleetwood* piles herself up in a hurricane on a coral reef, and the tale concerns the experiences of the survivors on the island and the opera-



"THERE WILL BE NINETEEN EXTRA TO LUNCH TO-DAY."

tions which result in their rescue by two other vessels and a Kanaka boat's crew. Every figure on the rather crowded canvas has its interest, but a few stand out above the others. Chief among these, perhaps, are *Mr. Munn*, the *Timor's* melancholy mate, the *Fleetwood's* carpenter, with his tenaciously-held creed of racial superiority, *Christianti*, the Kanaka steersman, a very superman in skill and fearlessness, *Willsher*, the unruly tough, with his possibilities of unexpected and surprising courage and self-sacrifice, and—more than all—*Captain Napier*, who in face of the loss of his ship and the probable result of such an event to a shipmaster never loses his grip on the situation, even though all but the shadow of his authority has gone. Mr. TOWNEND has availed himself to the full of the dramatic possibilities of the situation, and he tells the tale in a forthright and forceful fashion, with flashes of humour and with an excellent economy of words.

Britain and the Birds

A Bird-Lover's Britain
(By YEATES—G. K. YEATES—
This book has been written)
Shows birds and their mates
In every aspect,
Wood, seaboard and bent,
Where a mandible has pecked
From Caithness to Kent.

It is *not* anecdotal
Nor Science *de luxe*,
Nor yet of the total
Of "bird-table" books;
It's (since I must hammer a
Phrase for it out)
A man with a camera
Poking about.

Thus pictures exceeding
What's good have occurred;
The same with the reading—
It's good, every word,
From *raptor* and talon
To Lilliput wren.
Of PHILIP, yes, ALLAN,
Please buy the book, then.

Are We Downhearted?

Those that go down to the sea in ships see wonders in great waters, but sometimes (very seldom) they see them on land and have the kindness to tell us about them. *My Mis-spent Youth* (MACMILLAN, 7/6), by HENRY FITCH, is a really good volume about a young man who joined the Accountant Branch of H.M. Navy in 1909 and, becoming an Admiral's secretary with the uniform and rank of Major, went through fighting and trials in Serbia such as few present Army officers have endured. In Naval rank he was a non-combatant. In fact he organised the retreat of his troops (lasting seven weeks and with little food or shelter) from Belgrade when, as he gently puts it, "all the Naval 4·7 guns were abandoned and lost, but the guns were



VICTORIAN HEAT-WAVE



PERSONAL

Cabby (to perspiring Swell). "WOULD YOU LIKE TO GET UNDER THE SHADOW OF MY WHIP, SIR?"

Charles Keene, Punch, June 25th, 1870

stripped." A Paymaster-Major-Secretary-Lieutenant with full physical fitness (until the War, malaria and dysentery broke him down) has here given his Naval life. There are few on the Board of Admiralty to-day who went through such fighting experiences. He was just taking a snapshot of his first real command—a Montenegrin battalion aboard an Italian liner when she was blown in half, and with two hundred Admiralty sovereigns in his pockets he found himself overboard with not so many of his troops and, to save weight, only sixty sovereigns left when he was picked up. A very cheery book.

A Search for a Traitor

The Revolution Betrayed (FABER, 12/6), by LÉON TROTSKY, is a title-page that must surely arouse an ironic smile on STALIN'S grim countenance. Certainly STALIN will have no other reason for smiling during his perusal of these bitter pages. No more devastating criticism of STALIN'S government of Russia has come from anti-Soviet pens than this merciless revelation of present-day conditions in the land that LENIN intended to turn into a Communist paradise. The creator of the Red Army finds that the weapon which he forged for Russia's use in international class warfare has been blunted and adapted to other purposes. The officers' corps has been restored in all its "bourgeois magnificence" and the Cossack stripe and forelock has come back to symbolise the arrival of Thermidor. The ideal of class warfare has been replaced by that of collective security. World Revolution —like TROTSKY its prophet —has been banished from Russia, whose aim in international affairs is the perpetuation of existing frontiers rather than their "revolutionary abolition." Despite the truth it undoubtedly contains, TROTSKY'S book is the polemic of an exiled dictator against his successful rival rather than an impartial study of Russian conditions. Moreover, the sheepskin is not big enough to conceal the wolf.



"AH; BUT IT'S NOT THE *MATERIALS* YOU PAY FOR, MODOM, IT 'S THE MOTIF."

"Pity Women"

There is almost too much sadness in Miss RACHEL FERGUSON'S last book, *Alas, Poor Lady* (CAPE, 7/6). Yet most readers will at once call to mind female friends and relations whose lives have been starved and wasted by Victorian middle-class tradition in the same way as were those of *Grace Scrymgeour* and other characters in this clever saga of a family mentally and physically driven into slavery by parents whose clichés were "It is not done" and "But what would the servants think?" Young modern people may think, though wrongly, that these pictures of late Victorian and Edwardian life are overdrawn, but the author knows her characters well. While not sparing us their foolishness and unintentional cruelty, she still points out that all they did was with the best intentions. The book is not only a good novel, it is a warning to the present generation of parents to think of the future rather than the past and to allow children to see statements of the family finances and to teach them the use of a cheque-book. Miss FERGUSON writes so pityingly and wisely that she will surely help elderly spinsters to be treated more kindly than many of them are to-day.

In the Public Eye

Dancers in Mourning (HEINEMANN, 7/6) may without inaccuracy be called a detective story, for in it that engaging investigator, *Mr. Campion*, is fully employed; but this would be an inadequate description of a novel which is concerned as much with character as with crime. Indeed Miss MARGERY ALLINGHAM'S study of the *Sutanes* and their erratic household is strikingly significant and sympathetic. *Jimmy Sutane* was a celebrity in the theatrical world, so celebrated that he had aroused the envy of less successful actors, and Miss ALLINGHAM'S presentation of this temperamental genius is full of understanding. But the portrait that gives real distinction to her tale is that of *Jimmy's* wife, *Linda Sutane*. Under all conditions and at all times *Linda* remains a pathetically charming figure, and for once *Mr. Campion* found his heart coming into direct collision with his head. This story is from every aspect a worthy successor to *Flowers for the Judge*.

Vendetta

To be a director of Porslin, Ltd. may have been a lucrative position, but it was far from being an enviable one. First of all the Chairman was blown to smithereens, and this disaster was followed by a remorseless campaign against the remaining directors. Successively and by most clever devices four of them were slain, and it must readily be admitted that as a story of stark revenge *Death on the Board* (COLLINS, 7/6) lacks neither thoroughness nor ingenuity. Expert readers of detective fiction will probably have little difficulty in discovering by whom Porslin, Ltd. was so lethally pursued, for Mr. JOHN RHODE gives at least one clue which is distinctly suggestive. But this will not prevent them from admiring the workings of *Dr. Priestley's* astute mind while, as is his habit, he renders first and last aid to the police.

So There.

"WE HAVE NO CONNECTION WITH THE SHOP NEXT DOOR.
OUR MOTTO: CIVILITY."

Notice in Oxford Street.

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Charivaria

"THERE is one thing a novice should remember never to take out in a rowing-boat," mentions a holiday hint. The bung, we presume.

★ ★ ★

Our Members of Parliament, we are told, are gradually becoming more conversant with the important questions of the day. All the same they still don't know the answers.

★ ★ ★

A correspondent in a morning paper asks what can be done with soiled one-pound notes. We usually keep ours in boxes in a nice dry cellar.

★ ★ ★

A political writer describes ADOLF HITLER as one of the Big Three in European affairs. Signor MUSSOLINI of course is the other two.

★ ★ ★

The latter, incidentally, is thought to be the author of a recent unsigned article in an Italian newspaper. It is well known in Roman journalistic circles that his stuff is almost invariably accepted.



★ ★ ★

A mouse which was marked and released in this country was found in France and returned. This speaks well for the honesty of the French people.

★ ★ ★

A Sussex schoolboy has collected what is described as a complete range of English beetles, newts, ants and slugs. Evidently he has left no stone unturned.

★ ★ ★

A man employed at a Munich circus is seven feet two inches in his socks and weighs only nine stone. They say he has to stand in the same place twice to cast a shadow.

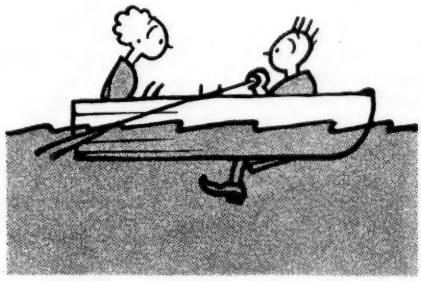
★ ★ ★

Horrible Slur on the Senior Service

"ADMIRAL IN WEST END STUDIO FIRE
60 Girls Run To Safety"
Morning Post.

★ ★ ★

Fourteen umbrellas were found in the house of a woman charged with shoplifting. She was only putting something by for a rainy day.



A realistic film of a battle between the warriors of rival Central African villages has been secured by an American camera-man. Naturally he didn't shoot until he saw the whites of their eyes.

★ ★ ★

This Week's Anticlimax

"An ardent fisherman, the Lieutenant-Governor (Sir James Mitchell) on his 71st birthday to-day, took a morning walk in the beautiful gardens attached to Government House and watched the goldfish in the pond."—*Australian Paper.*

★ ★ ★

In a recent prosecution brought by a railway company a girl stated that she must have chewed the date off her ticket. Presumably she was unaware that fruit can always be obtained on the platform.

★ ★ ★

"What can one do when one's pipes are all blocked up with sparrows' nests?" asks a worried householder in an evening paper. Smoke cigarettes instead.



★ ★ ★

According to a psychologist it is possible to persuade oneself that one is more clever than one really is. But only of course if one is less clever than one really believes oneself to be.

★ ★ ★

"There was a little moisture on the pitch early in the morning and the ball off which J. Parks was caught at the wicket got up abruptly. After that it relapsed into complete docility."—*Times.*

No doubt thoroughly ashamed of itself.

★ ★ ★

One of the EPSTEIN statues being removed from the façade at Agar House represents "Form Emerging from Chaos." And according to one critic that is exactly what is happening to the façade of Agar House.

★ ★ ★

"If you walk out into the garden on a bright sunny day," says a medical writer, "and everything suddenly seems to go round and round, it is a sign that there is something wrong with your eyes." Or have you tried to get into the hammock?



The Art of Plain Living

(With apologies to M. André L. Simon)

In this age of universal culture, when everyone who pays three-and-sixpence for a bottle of Burgundy wants to see a date on the label, I feel that there must be a demand somewhere for a return to the simple things of life. "We cannot," said Aloyau de Jarnifûte in 1567, "live exclusively upon Imperial Tokay and the tongues of peacocks;" and in this little work I have tried to show how much more acceptable is a dinner of herbs where appreciation is than a stalled ox and ignorance therewith.

Hors d'œuvres

"*Hors d'œuvres*" is the French for "out of work"; it has been observed by a great French thinker that England has a million and three-quarter *hors d'œuvres* and only one sauce. This is an exaggeration; England has three sauces, but as they are all sold in identical bottles the great thinker's mistake is pardonable. England has, however, only one *hors d'œuvre*, which is a half grape-fruit with a *glacé* cherry in the middle. Really classy people think it is a good thing to insert a gill of grocer's port into this confection.

Soup

Soups are of two kinds, known to gastronomes as "thick" and "clear" soups. The basis of the first is cabbage-water, which should be of a clear pale-green colour and possess a characteristic bouquet. Various entertaining effects may be obtained by the introduction of—

Small cubes of carrot
Small cubes of turnip
Small cubes of parsnip
A handful of pearl-barley
A dead bluebottle.

With all clear soups the only possible drink to serve is *Coca-Cola*. Such alien beverages as *American Ice-Cream Soda*, *Cherry Ciderette* and so on are entirely unworthy of the true soup-connoisseur's notice.

Thick soups are constructed on a foundation of *purée* of potatoes. Vegetable soups are the most acceptable to the gourmet. These are generally white in colour and differ only in name, the flavour of all being identical. A few drops of cochineal will produce *Crème de Tomates* (Tomatoes). The *Brown Windsor Soup* so often found on British menus does not really exist at all; it is a misprint for *Brown Windsor Soap*.

After a thick soup a good vintage lime-juice will go down well. If *Mulligatawny* is served any darned thing will do as long as it has a chunk of ice in it.

A third kind of soup is *Scotch Broth*. This is one of those incredible productions, made principally from oatmeal, which Scotsmen consume with such evident relish. Leave them to it.

Fish

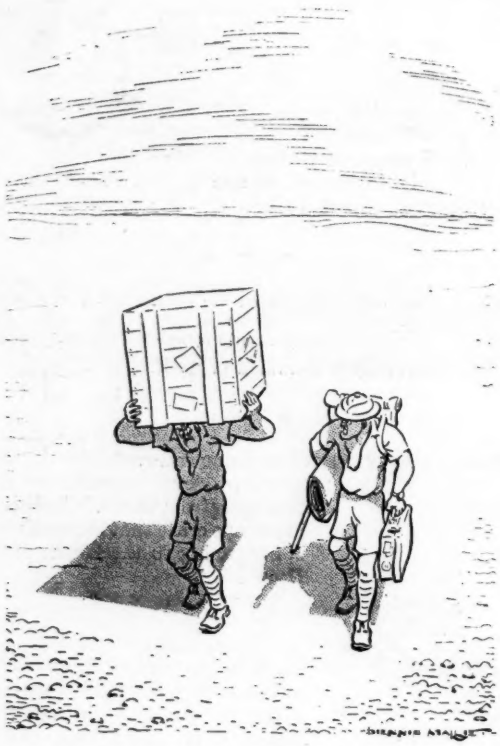
There is a culpable heresy current among superficial critics of food that fish is too flavourless a comestible properly to earn its place at the table of anyone who thinks about what he is eating. This hasty judgment, however, ignores the existence of such excellent fish as the *Salmon*, *Sardine*, *Salmon*, etc., which are thoroughly matured in tin before being brought to the table.

With *Salmon*, served cold on a dirty plate in a kind of watery red liquor and sometimes accompanied by a chunk of burnt toast, the best drink is undoubtedly a bottle of stout. With *Sardines* (which should *always* be packed head to tail), the preference of many is for a bottle of stout.

Salmon may also be made, by the addition of yesterday's mashed potato, into *Fish-cakes* (*Gâteaux de Poisson*), which are greatly prized in many English homes. The best beverage to accompany these is a nice cup of tea.

Meat

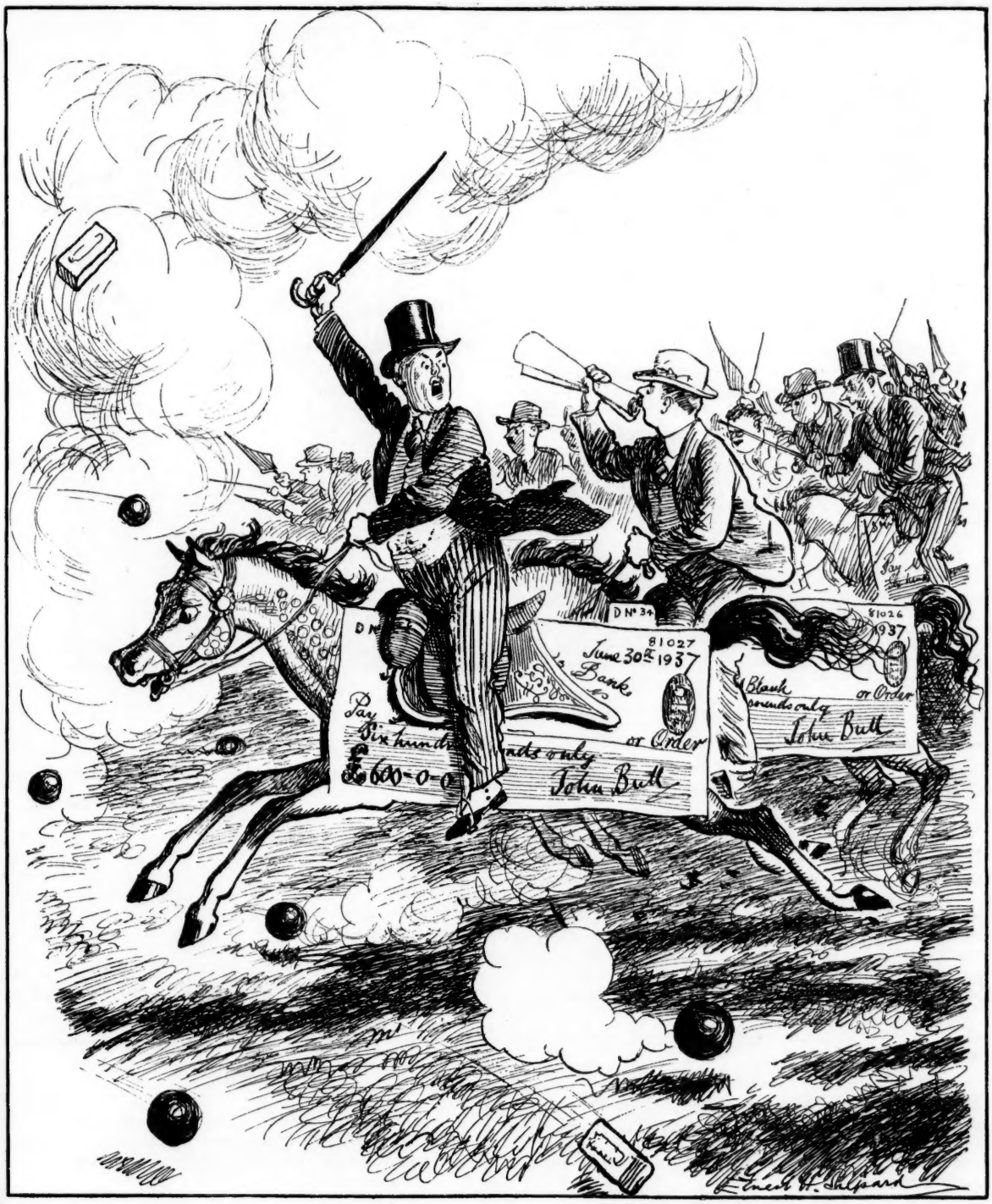
There are two kinds of meat in the répertoire of the English cook—*Mutton* and *Beef*. You can tell them apart quite easily, as mutton is cut thick and beef is cut thin. With either of these a sound full-bodied lemonade should be



"Oh, stop grumbling, Oglethorpe. You seem to forget you 've got the only bit of shade for miles."



"I hope you won't find the air here too relaxing."



THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHTLY PAID

THEIRS NOT TO REASON WHY,
THEIRS NOT TO MAKE REPLY,
THEIRS BUT TO PUT IT BY—
WELL-EARNED £600.



"Of course, Sir, hairdressing is as yet only in its infancy."

served; but if this is done, care should be taken to avoid such pronounced condiments as salt, pepper, mustard, etc., which are fatal to the delicate fruity flavour.

POULTRY

It is essential for the gourmet to remember that, however you may serve it, a chicken is never called a chicken. In its extreme youth it is a *Poussin*; with the first signs of adolescence, such as spots on the face, it becomes a *Poulet*; later on it faces the world as a *Poularde* or *Chapon*; and eventually it tends to finish up as a *Galantine*. In Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika it is called a *kuku*, which is just another example of that bird's irrepressible habit of worming its way into other people's preserves.

There are ever so many ways of preparing chicken, but every one of them is Fowl.

GAME

The more elaborate kinds of game, such as *Snakes and Ladders*, *Contract Bridge* and *Monopoly*, should be sedulously avoided at the dinner-table. Only the very lightest type of relaxation is acceptable. In particular the following are to be recommended:—

Riddles

"I Spy"

"Coffee-Pot,"

and for the more daring tastes an occasional

Practical joke,

such as passing one's neighbour a plate heated to a temperature of at least 500° C. in a slow oven.

With any of these a fairly dry orange-squash should be served liberally, or, if this is not obtainable, a really wet water.

SAUCE

The conscientious devotee of the art of plain living will be especially careful over his choice of *Sauce*. For his purpose—that is to say, to slop on the side of his plate of cold meat and then forget until he has finished—the best sauces are those which are put up in tall slender bottles of square section and designated by a brace of alphabetical or numerical ciphers.

If a tankard of mild-and-bitter or bitter is to be served later on, however, it is better to leave sauces of this kind severely alone and stick to plain mustard (*moutarde*).

J. M. B.

He dwelt in our world but his kindly eyes
Saw more than we knew was there;
He guessed at the childlike heart that lies
On our sleeve for a poet to tear.
He made us laugh and he made us weep
With his tender ridiculous whims;
And now that he lies in his last long sleep
And that bright-burning spirit dims,
We think he is gone, not with angel hosts
At Heaven's portal to stand,
But gladly, with small and familiar ghosts,
To visit his Neverland.

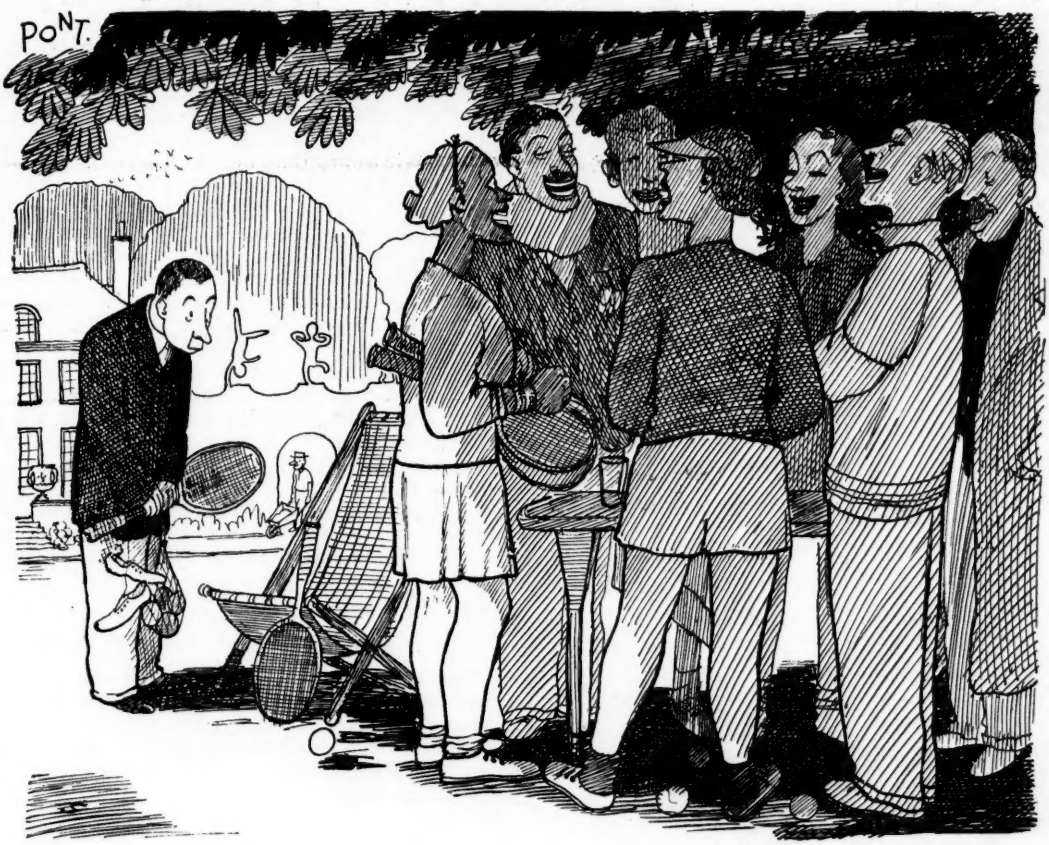
Where Should We Be Without Crime?

We're told that it's bad to behave like a cad
And run off with the wife of another;
We're informed it's not done to be armed with a gun
And discharge it at somebody's brother;
But people have got to be burgled and shot
Or somehow create a sensation,
For sinners and crooks, in the flesh and in books,
Are the joy of our virtuous nation.

Where should we be without Crime?
Where should we be without Vice?
What should we do if the people we knew
Were all unbelievably nice?
Who can imagine Lord Beaverbrook's fate
If Europe's affairs were all run on the straight?
And wouldn't Sir Philip's existence be tame
If wrong 'uns decided to give up the Game?
What would become of Dean Inge
If he couldn't complain of our morals—
And then have a peep before going to sleep
At a thriller called *Death in the Laurels*?
Oh, where should we be without Crime?

An author may vex with a treatise on sex
And induce the rebuffs of the parson,
But he'll never disgust if he grants us our lust
For blackmail and murder and arson.
So raise up your glass to the criminal class
And show them your grateful affection,
For if they abode by the recognised code
There wouldn't be any detection.

Where should we be without Crime?
What should we do without Sin?
What should we say if the youth of to-day
Found nothing attractive in gin?
What would remain for Lord Tyrrel to do
If films automatically came under "U"?
And wouldn't our playwrights be sadly bereft
In a world without jealousy, hatred and theft?
What would become of Miss Sayers
If everyone kept "on the level"?—
I hope I am wrong, but I think before long
That *Lord Peter* would go to the Devil!
Oh, where should we be without Crime?



THE BRITISH CHARACTER

IMPORTANCE OF BEING ATHLETIC

The Muse in Conference

I HAVE been reading with a good deal of interest in *New Verse* about what is described as the "Oxford Collective Poem." This, in case you don't know about it, is a poem that was produced by twelve undergraduates in collaboration over a period of one month, and is probably the best bit of work produced by a committee since 1611 (if we except that powerful letter to the Press, signed by Lord Zootle and fifteen others, protesting against the performance of street musicians in the vicinity of Gallimaufry aerodrome). I do not pretend to grasp every word of this poem—I say this only to discourage people from writing to ask me to explain it—but I was so much impressed by it that I immediately got together a committee to produce another. We have been at work for some time now and we are getting on fine.

There are nine of us: a bricklayer, a piano-tuner, a veterinary surgeon, two tobacconists, a waiter, a book-maker, a paper-tearer, and a man who turns a handle to open a small bridge (guess which is me), and we are carefully following the undergraduates' method as described in *New Verse*.

The process begins with the collection of "images." Each member of the group records at the end of the day "the scene, event, subject or phrase" which has most occupied his mind. Weeks of days like this go by; then the "images" are pooled and a list is made of those which occur most often.

Here, right at the start, we encountered a difficulty. The twelve were all undergraduates, all in Oxford, and all interested in the writing of literature; they found it easy enough after three weeks to list six images built up from recurring details in the whole bunch. We, on the other hand, had much less in common and we spent only a week on this part of the business. Our pool was sixty-three images without a single common feature.

The only thing to do was to vote for the best six in the list. The winning ones were these—

A girl arguing with a platypus.
Owls.
Low C played on a tuba.
A 1921 sardine.
Postmen against a whitewashed wall.
The words "What fools these beetles more?"

(The result of the voting we put down to apathy, the lateness of the harvest, the bus strike, inadequate catering arrangements, apathy, and apathy.)

The next step was for each of us to write one pentameter line dealing with each image. When this had been done twice (for the first nine sets revealed differences of opinion about the significance of the word "pentameter": one line, for instance, was "The little owls, the brittle owls, they gi' me a pain i' th' neck," and another, "See where the chalk-smeared postmen sulk") we voted again to decide on the six best lines. Result—

So she squats plausible, duck-bill glumly mute
To wit: The owls now hoot to what? To woo
Beelow, beelow, beelow, whoa-ho, whoa-ho
Succulent nestling cradled in vintage oil
With loads of letters, backed by brilliant bricks
Put down a piece of coke to baffle beetles

(Two lengths; length. Winner trained by A. Choke. "What owls of fury, ah, what owls of fury" disqualified for bumping and boring.)

"The task now was," as the undergraduates found, "to integrate these lines and their ideas into a unified poem." We are finding this a very much tougher job than they found it.

To begin with, some of the members of our group professed themselves completely stumped and would not attempt to make a poem. (The idea was for each to write one, then to alter the other eight as he thought fit, and finally to vote for the best complete altered poem.) It was then found that the third of the lines given above had been lifted from the celebrated song "The Music Goes Round and Around," and although, as Mr. ELIOT has shown, it is permissible to use whole passages from earlier poems, still the more sober-minded of our little group were disconcerted by this discovery. Then one of the tobacconists won seventy-two pounds in a sweep and went to Brighton.

Moreover, there is the actual difficulty of integrating those lines and their ideas, which is something fierce.

Unlike the undergraduates, we felt it necessary to have a meeting to discuss the general plan of the poem before any of us started to write it. At this meeting it was agreed that the scene would have to be in Australia, in order to accommodate the platypus, but that the girl would have to be a visitor to the country (for no native Australian, it was argued, would be neurotic enough both to argue with a platypus and attempt to nonplus beetles with a bit of coke). A speaker professing familiarity with the habits of Australian owls declared that they cried not "Tu-whoo" but "Tew-weow," and we all promised to bear this in mind.

It was further decided that the letters borne by the postman should be letters from abroad, and that the sardine also should have been brought by them in a parcel from England.

This left us only the awkward line—

Beelow, beelow, beelow, whoa-ho whoa-ho,

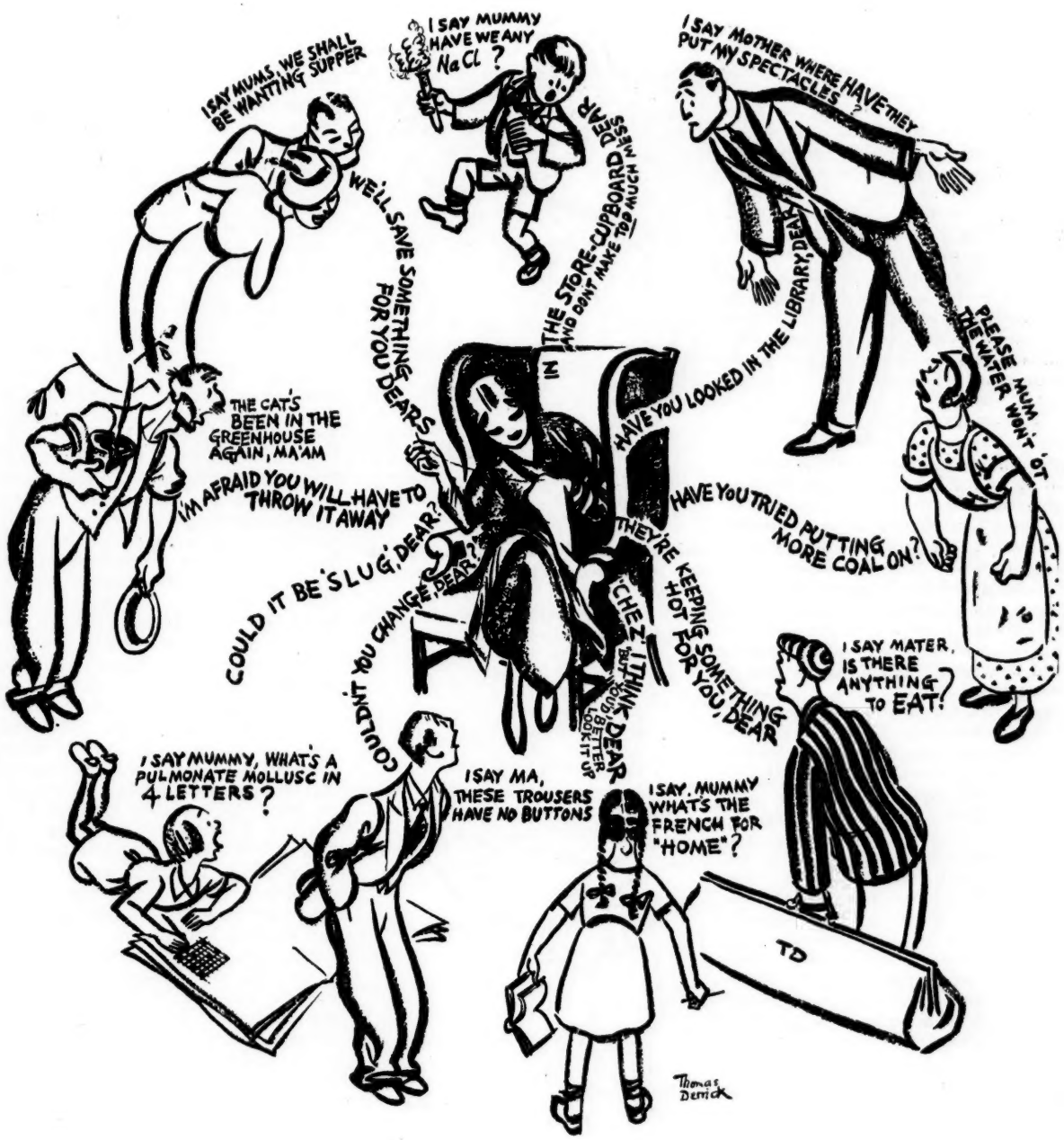
and the conclusion we reached about this was that it would have to be used as a refrain, which meant that the whole thing must be a sort of song.

With this tough assignment we parted. In a day or two we are due to meet again to alter and vote on the finished poems. Mine begins—

Down in the forest something's terse. A goil

(to rhyme with "oil," which may, if desired, be pronounced "erl" or "airl"), and I have every intention of altering all the others until they are identical with it. R. M.




I SAY MUMMY HAVE WE ANY NaCl ?
I SAY MOTHER WHERE HAVE THEY PUT MY SPECTACLES ?
I SAY MUMS, WE SHALL BE WANTING SUPPER
WELL SAVE SOMETHING FOR YOU DEARS
IN THE STORE-CUPBOARD DEAR WHO DONT MAKE TOO MUCH MESS
HAVE YOU LOOKED IN THE LIBRARY, DEAR
PLEASE MUM THE WATER WON'T 'OT
THE CAT'S BEEN IN THE GREENHOUSE AGAIN, MA'AM
I'M AFRAID YOU WILL HAVE TO THROW IT AWAY
HAVE YOU TRIED PUTTING MORE COAL ON?
COULD IT BE 'SLUG' DEAR?
COULDN'T YOU CHANGE, DEAR?
"CHEZ" I THINK DEAR BUT YOU'D BETTER LOOK IT UP
THEY'RE KEEPING SOMETHING HOT FOR YOU, DEAR
I SAY MATER, IS THERE ANYTHING TO EAT?
I SAY MUMMY, WHAT'S A PULMONATE MOLLUSC IN 4 LETTERS?
I SAY MA, THESE TROUSERS HAVE NO BUTTONS
I SAY, MUMMY WHAT'S THE FRENCH FOR "HOME"?
TD
Thomas Derrick

MOTHER

At the Pictures

Ink and Ice

If one is in any need of proofs of the difference between America and England, a new example may be obtained at the film *Love is News*, a picture which, I suppose, is not so far from the fact. The tones of the movie-world are, it is true, a little bit heightened above those of daily life, but not excessively; and therefore we have to believe that there is, over there, a public eye as difficult for a rich man to avoid as it is for a camel to get through a needle's—and especially so after he has stolen a railroad. In the present instance the rich man has a millionairess niece, whose activities interest a mob of New York reporters and camera-men, to one of which demi-gods it amuses her to claim that she is affianced.

Thenceforward the newspaper headings are concerned only with the progress of this affair—for love is news—while we see the editor of the *Express* alternating between delight in his star reporter for bringing so much special publicity to the paper, and disgust with him whenever things go wrong. Accustomed as I am to newspaper offices where new editors are not greeted with bouquets of roses, and where socks on the jaw are rarely, if ever, exchanged, and where some kind of proportion is respected, it all bewilders me. As to the eternal telephones, some innovating individual should produce a film of American newspaper life without a telephone in it at all. But since Hollywood hates equally innovation and individualism, this is unlikely to happen.

Meanwhile we must speculate on what the next step in realism is to be. A time surely must come when the unnoticed, or, at any rate, unmarked, knocking-out of staff-reporters by editors and of editors by staff-reporters will become insipid. What then? Short of shooting each other, which might be too final for the plot, what could they do? Time, no doubt, will show.

The acting of *Love is News* has been keyed up to swiftness and some of it is very good. Tyrone Power as *Steve Leyton*, the reporter at whom *Toni Gateson* (Loretta Young) flings herself or pretends to fling herself—I was never sure which—is as brisk and resourceful as that kind of young man ought to be, and *Toni* herself is galvanic. As *Canavan*, the much-tried editor, who gives and receives punches, Don Ameche lacks nothing in this same galvanism. As to Slim Summerville's part in this picture, it no doubt has its uses in removing gravity: but any chance of *Love is News* being



EDITORIAL COMMENT

Martin J. Canavan . . Don Ameche
Steve Leyton . . . . . Tyrone Power

taken seriously, is spoiled by his farcical American judge.

If you like spectacular skating you will like *One in a Million*, for it is a



ICE ACE

Greta Muller . . . . . Sonja Henie

film made round and about Sonja Henie, the Olympic winner and the most accomplished of all dancers on ice. Nothing so graceful as her revolutions and evolutions have ever been witnessed—at any rate by me, who saw her first at the rink behind the Tate Gallery and have never forgotten the triumph, after her graceful swayings and swoopings and pirouettings, of her return suddenly to the arrested perpendicular. Seeing her then I never thought that one day she would be a movie star. Nothing, however, is beyond Hollywood, and therefore here she is, not perhaps with so lovely a head as this famous cinema lady or that, but, when it comes to the feet, leaving them nowhere.

But it has, I fear, to be confessed that, after a very little while, skating, even the most miraculous skating, is monotonous to watch and so becomes a weariness; and it will not be surprising if long before those other famous cinema ladies cease to enchant us, Sonja will have vanished from competition. Let, therefore, those who want to see perfect skating hasten to *One in a Million*—one in a million being Sonja herself.

Having acquired the services of Sonja it was necessary for Hollywood hastily to fit her with a part and provide a supporting cast; and what more natural than to make her an innkeeper's daughter in a Swiss mountain resort and to make *Heinrich Muller*, the innkeeper, an ex-Olympic skating champion who is devoting all his spare energies to training his little *Greta* to be better even than himself? Simple. Having arranged this, it was easy to engage Adolphe Menjou, as *Tad Spencer*, the leader of a jazz-band, and send him and his wife and the whole musical company, which naturally includes the Ritz Brothers, to stay in the hotel. But the love-interest? Yes, that had to be taken care of too, and so *Bob Harris*, an American reporter, in the person of Don Ameche, very improbably is sent by his paper to inquire into a fire in the neighbourhood; stays in *Muller's* hotel; and, before the curtain falls, wins *Greta's* hand.

The American reporter, as I have already indicated, is, you see, taking the place of such favourite but obsolete screen heroes as the old cowboy and the old gangster and the old rum-runner and the old racketeer and even the G-man; but, with a certain amount of personal experience behind me, I need many grains of salt. E. V. L.

"We are asked to state that Winifred ——, who was referred to in our report of 'Highwayman Love,' produced by C—— Amateur Operatic and Dramatic Society, as being a good comedienne, but whose voice lacked power, was not a comedienne and her voice did not lack power."—*Local Paper.*

Do you understand *now*?



THE PESSIMISTS' CRICKET CLUB WINS THE TOSS

Umpire's Reverie

(*"In summer when the days are long*
Perhaps you'll understand the song.")

If seven sprigs of butterscotch
Would paint the village pump
You'd have to freeze the parson's watch
Before the cat would jump.
A pint of glue (the merest splotch)
Would do it . . .
Middle stump.

Suppose the blacksmith fried the moon
Upon a pewter tray?
Unless the wedding was at noon
To stir the melted hay
You'd need a heavy velvet spoon
And not a hammock . . .
Play.

But if the policeman's only child
Had iced the petrol, why
Maybe the squire would not have filed
That jug of apple-pie?
No wonder that the admiral smiled
To see it boil . . .
Leg-bye.

Ah! Take the postman's uncle, now,
Who told the simple drover
To catch pink snakes—he ought to plough
Wild borax in the clover.
He couldn't skin them, anyhow,
Without a sunshade . . .
Over.

Assuming you could strain the sun
Through, say, a waterfall
(Not with an axe—that method's one
Fit for the servants'-hall),
Then would it bake a Sally Lunn
By Greenwich Time? . . .
No-ball.

Perhaps it is a better plan
To let the lightning sprout,
For, pounded up with pemmican,
It cures the Colonel's gout
When jellied in a warming-pan
With peppered strawberries . . .
Out!

R. C. S.

Silly Saws—II

Concentration

THE proverb-monger is never so smug as he is about the middle-class virtues and the choice of a career—application, contentment, safety first and the 9.15. One day the wretched boy at school who still has some of the blood of old England in him is thrilled with the stories of DRAKE, of Captain COOK, of the old pioneers who roamed the world and discovered the Empire and trekked and hit the trail and so forth. And the next day he is brought up with the pusillanimous and fatuous assertion that

"A rolling stone gathers no moss."

Who, by the way, desires to gather moss? The proverb has reference to the choice of a career; and if any stone (in such a context) did gather moss it would at once be abused as sluggish, complacent and behind the times. So the proverb is puerile, in form, anyway. But it is the spirit with which I chiefly quarrel. It is of the same brand as

"Let every cobbler stick to his last"

and

"Jack of all trades, master of none."

If every cobbler had stuck to his last Mr. LLOYD GEORGE would have remained a country solicitor and the late JAMES BARRIE a provincial reporter, and Lord NUFFIELD, I suppose, would still be mending bicycle punctures and letting someone else look after the motor-cars. And by Jack-of-all-trades I suppose the dull dog means somebody like Mr. WINSTON CHURCHILL, who is master of about six.

No, Sir, this is feeble meat for the growing British mind. And fortunately, as usual, there are some good sound sayings on the other side. Here, for example, is the complete answer to the Rolling Stone school from robust and bonny Scotland:—

"A ganging fit (foot) *is aye getting."*

And here is a good word for the Jack-of-all-trades—

"Many ventures make a full freight."

We may mention also

"He that travels far knows much."

But these healthy observations are kept from our youth by their moss-grown, Jack-of-one-trade, cobbler-minded pastors and masters; and I feel it my duty to advertise them here.

But before, my child, we conclude this section of the lecture let us observe a most comical thing. The very same sheep who exhort you to stick to your last or be a stationary stone, or, in other words, to apply yourself to one activity only, will mutter cautiously the next moment—

"Don't put all your eggs into one basket,"

or

"Have two strings to your bow."

And, if they don't, you might remind them.

Does Dress Matter?

The student who seeks practical aid from the proverbs in this department of life will find himself, as usual, bewildered by conflicting testimony.

At an early age he will learn that

"Fine feathers make fine birds."

And this doctrine is not confined to England. The Scots say

"Fair fowles has fair feathers,"

though it would be right to add that they also say

"Bonny feathers dinna aye mak' bonny birds."

But the French say

"La belle plume fait le bel oiseau."

And the Dutch—

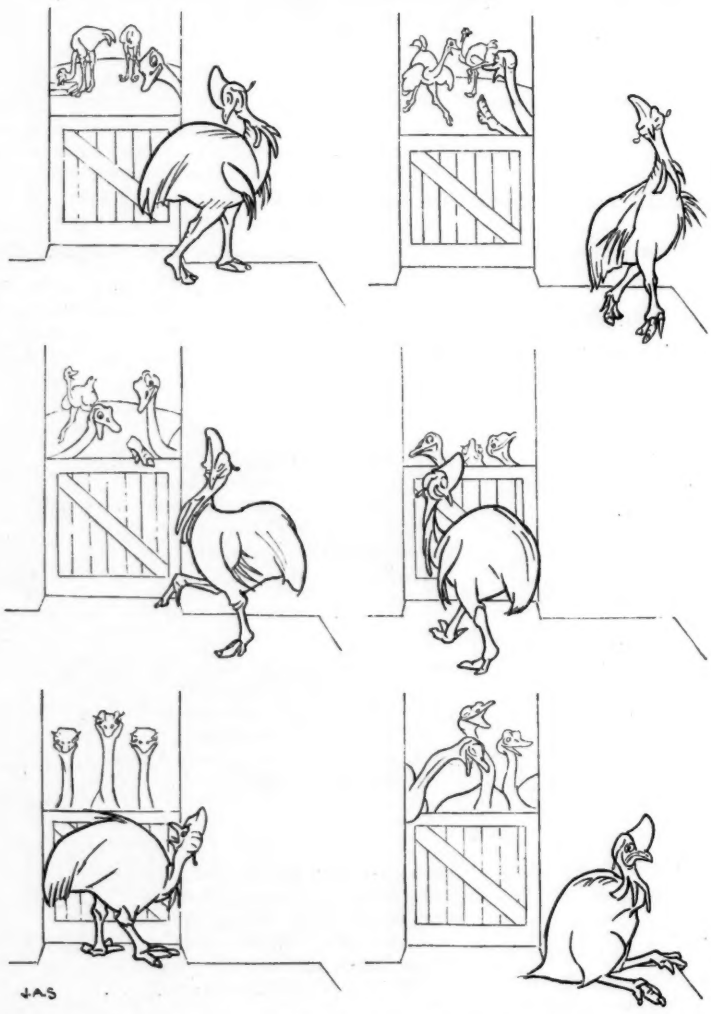
"De schoone veêren maaken den schoonen vogel."

And the French, a very long time ago, went so far as to say

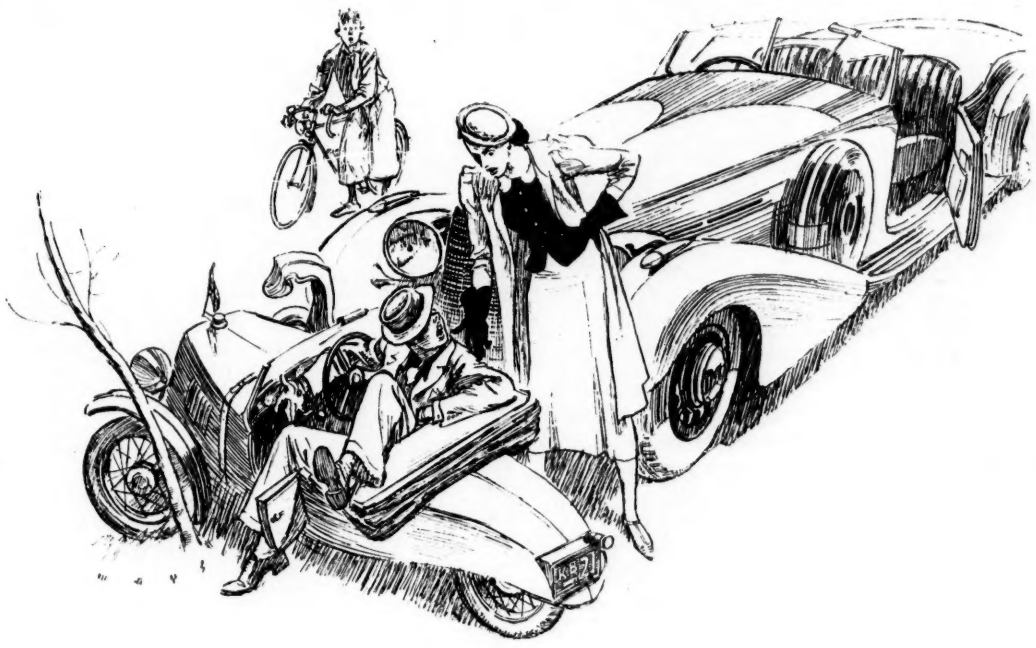
"Robe refait moult homme,"

or

"Clothes do much to make a man."



AT THE ZOO: THE CASSOWARY IS OBSERVED



"My dear young man, you didn't even ring your bell."

So that, except for the unfortunate conflict of opinion in Scotland, the evidence is fairly clear. The schoolboy accordingly delights in his lavender waistcoat and brilliant blazer, pays much attention to his own dress and even that of his mamma.

But the dim folk who compose the proverbs cannot endure to see the boy enjoying himself, much less looking in the glass. Ascot and Lord's enrage them. So they come back pompously with

"All is not gold that glitters,"

and

"Handsome is as handsome does,"

and

"It is not the coat that makes the gentleman."

The light goes out of the poor boy's life, he becomes careless about washing the neck and drops mutton-fat on his waistcoat; he abandons the notion of being a Life Guard, enters for the Civil Service and is ploughed, and becomes a motor salesman, an occupation in which smart clothes are the first essential.

All these proverbs should be banned by the Board of Education.

Hospitality

The proverb-monger is so full of virtuous advice and high moral tone that, loathsome though he appears to any healthy citizen, one is inclined to make the grudging admission that, on the whole, he is a worthy character. But when his utterances are scientifically collated and examined we perceive some really nasty and surprising streaks in the character.

Take the question of hospitality. His record on this question is entirely deplorable. The hospitality of Spain for instance is fabulous. Before I went there (in 1918) I had always heard that the Spanish host insisted on giving you everything he had. But the first Spanish proverb I learned was this—

"A guest and a fish stink on the third day."

We have nothing, I think, quite so brutal as that. But the Scots come near it with

"He that comes uncalled sits unserved."

Then there is—

"Last come worst served"

and

"No song no supper."

What a mean unChristian spirit is here exhibited! What a picture of our time posterity will draw! For, mind you, here I can find no proverb on the other side. There are rows of sententious sayings about "a good horse," "judge," "merchant," "dog," "surgeon," "wife," but none about "a good host." The virtues of the open door and the generous board are quite uncelebrated by the proverbian, and our tender young are taught

(*a*) That guests are undesirable;

(*b*) That if they come at all we should get something out of them, if it is only a song;

(*c*) That those who come last, through whatever accident or misfortune, are not entitled to the same treatment as those, perhaps greedy or thrusting, who come earlier; and

(*d*) That those that are not invited, including presumably the wayfarer and the needy, are not to be served at all.

And this—the proverbian—is the fellow who is always lecturing *us*!

No wonder, then, that in every British home, on every day on which the Smiths have been invited, the family in dismal unison remark—

"My god, the Smiths are coming!"

A. P. H.



"WHAT ABOUT HAVING AN AGENDA, MRS. PHILIPSON?"
"GRACIOUS, MY DEAR! THIS ISN'T A COCKTAIL PARTY."

Prayer to Minerva

On the eve of the School Certificate Examination

O GODDESS of all Wisdom, Learning, come,
Brood over this my form these dreadful days;
And, as they sit with empty brains and numb,
With wide eyes fixed in horrified amaze
On Latin prose or sum
They cannot do—
Oh, then, thy servant prays,
You'll pull them through.

In special to your care would I commend
This light-haired boy called Smith. Ignore his shirts,
His plastered locks that to the class-room lend
An air of Araby. Although it hurts,
Your normal taste transcend;
I beg of you,
Have pity on Smith Terts
And pull him through.

Then there is one whose Mathematics are
A bane to him, in other subjects bright;
Keep his equations, Goddess, up to par,
See that he gets his logarithms right,
Be thou his guiding star,
Guiding him true
In geometric night,
And pull him through.

Nor overlook, Minerva—if thou durst
So slight one to whom all poor mortals yield!—
Our one illustrious member of the First
Who spends long school hours on the cricket-field
Bowling, they say, like HIRST;
In crises who
A gallant bat doth wield—
Yes, pull him through.

Here is another boy who is no good
At anything, and yet for him I plead
(Though with small reason, Lord knows, why I should),
Who does no work, brings novels in to read,
Whose head is made of wood
Compound of glue . . .
Still in his hour of need
Inspire him too.

Thus, for thine annual bounty, hear my cry
In supplication on my bended knees;
They are but young who spread their wings to fly,
Give them a good push off, Minerva, please.
Another such year I
Would hate to do
With any one of these,
So pull 'em through.



CONVERSATION PIECE

Impressions of Parliament

Synopsis of the Week

***Monday, June 21st.*—Lords: Ministers of the Crown Bill taken in Committee.**

Commons: New N.D.C. debated.

***Tuesday, June 22nd.*—Lords: Exportation of Horses Bill given Second Reading.**

Commons: Resolution carried to increase Members' Salaries to £600.

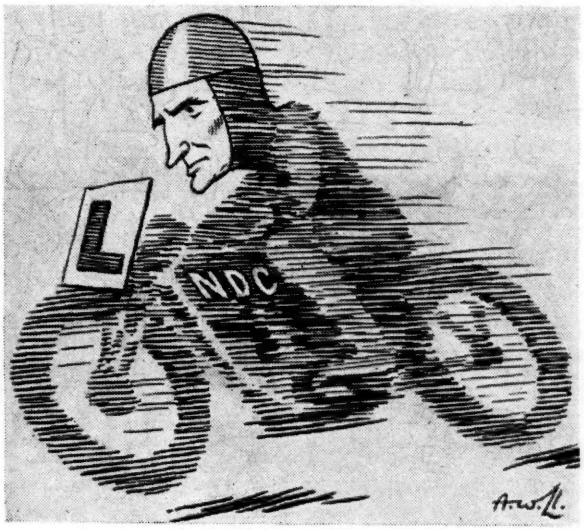
***Wednesday, June 23rd.*—Lords: Debate on Coal Royalties.**

Commons: Vote for Ministry of Labour.

Monday, June 21st.—Lord SALISBURY is still unsatisfied about the wisdom of tying together the offices of Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury in the Ministers of the Crown Bill, and this afternoon, when Lord HAILSHAM told him that one good reason for the connection was the inconvenience which would be caused if the Permanent Secretary to the Treasury, in advising the P.M. on matters to do with the Civil Service, was not advising his own Chief, he criticised the proposal afresh as a new attempt on the part of the Treasury to run the Civil Service. Although he withdrew his amendment, he hoped that the Government would reconsider the point.

At Question-time in the Commons Mr. DAY's request for information about the success of the electric system in the Chambre des Députés in Paris, by which members can vote without leaving their seats, led Mr. HERBERT WILLIAMS to suggest that in England the principle should be carried further and voting-buttons installed in Members' own homes, and Mr. P.'s R. to wonder if the reformed Parliament of the Machine Age will not perhaps be an inhuman combination of wireless telephony and television, with Mr. Speaker carrying out his functions in a slightly modified form at a control panel surmounted by the mace.

The Government is often accused of showing an improper respect for vested interests, but at any rate nobody can accuse them of timidity in the face of the ebony-vested interests of Sir OSWALD MOSLEY. This gentleman, anxious to emerge from the dimming recesses of the political haberdasher's before he is entirely forgotten, had planned, with what cannot be described as the maximum of diplomacy, good manners or common-sense, to march his Aryan cohorts through the Jewish district of the East End on Sunday, July 4; and Sir SAMUEL HOARE, who reasonably claimed to be interpreting the spirit and letter of the policy decided by Parliament last year, announced that political processions would be barred in that area for the next six weeks. Mr. GALLACHER'S protest that the HOME SECRETARY should be able to put an end to provocation without interfering with public rights was neither fair nor wise.



A NEW RIDER ON A NEW MACHINE

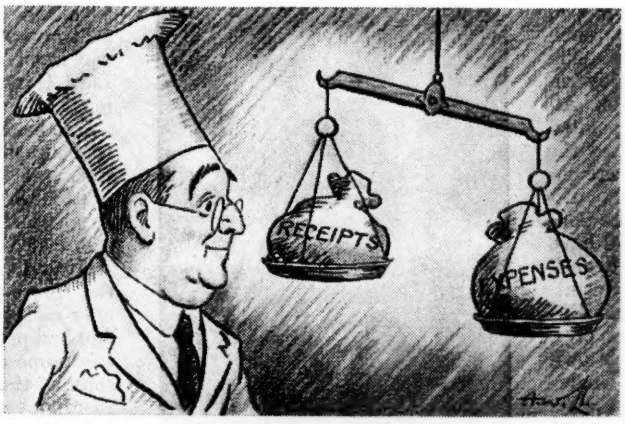
SIR JOHN SIMON TAKES A TRIAL RUN.

There was very little real opposition to the new N.D.C., which Sir JOHN SIMON later explained to a House clearly not wishing to be critical. Debenture interest, but not preference dividends, would be allowed before profits were arrived at for the purposes of the tax; and on a sliding-scale this would strike the full rate of five per cent. at £12,000. For the sake of simplicity the professions, with the exception of stockbrokers, jobbers and insurance brokers, would escape.

But, as Mr. BOOTHBY pointed out, it was strange (if not uncanny) to find industry positively welcoming an imposition of £25,000,000 a year.

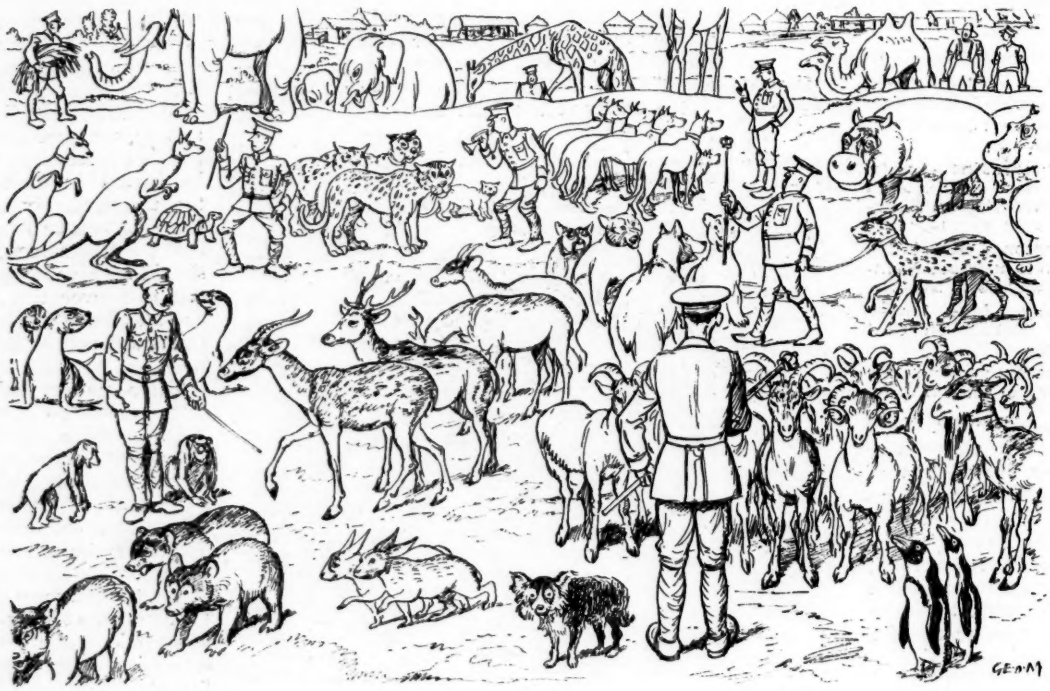
Tuesday, June 22nd.—A Bill to prevent the export of aged English horses to the Continent (there to reappear either in cabs or rissoles) got its Second Reading easily in the Lords and should meet with wide approval. It has already received the blessing of the Commons.

Jarrow, which has had as sad a time as any town in the kingdom, is at last looking up again. In answer to Miss WILKINSON, its Member, Mr. STANLEY made the satisfactory announcement that a new steel-plant is to be set up there with a capital of £1,000,000 provided under the ægis of the Commissioner for the Special Areas. No details are yet public, but the works will give employment to several hundred men.



The Chef (SIR JOHN GANZONI). "PERHAPS WE SHALL BE ABLE TO BALANCE THIS BETTER NOW THAT MEMBERS ARE GOING TO GET MORE PAY."

[A loss of over £400 is reported by the Kitchen Committee for 1936.]



THE ENGLISH COUNTRYSIDE

SCENE ON A MILITARY MASCOT FARM

Mr. EDEN could not be expected to tell the House very much about the hourly fluctuations of foreign affairs, but he was able to give an assurance that the Government had no intention of joining in naval demonstrations off Spain.

The Resolution raising the pay of Members from £400 to £600 was passed by the House this evening more easily than it would have been if the Government had permitted a free vote. Although, as Mr. BARR shrewdly pointed out, most of those who criticised the increase were in comfortable circumstances themselves, there was a distinct feeling, not confined to the Conservative benches, that it would have been more seemly to postdate it until the beginning of the next Parliament. Who could conceive, asked Sir EDWARD GRIGG, of the directors of a company deciding to raise their own fees without consulting the shareholders?

But Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, who moved the Resolution, saw no point in leaving such an issue to the hurly-burly of a General Election, and described the surprise and distress with which he and Lord BALDWIN had examined some of the Members' budgets which had been confidentially supplied to them and which had indicated genuine and distressing hardship.

Wednesday, June 23rd.—The Lords



AN EVENING STAR

MISS CAZALET MAKES AN EFFECTIVE APPEARANCE.

did not take too kindly to a Government Bill introduced this afternoon by Lord MUNSTER, which proposes to set up a voluntary register of coal holdings as a preliminary to the major Bill, due next Session, to deal with the whole question of the unification of coal royalties. It was explained to them that approval of the one would in no way involve approval of the other; but Lord GAINSFORD objected to Parliament committing itself to expenditure before being satisfied that the measure to secure unification was fair, or would work (of which he had doubt), and Lord HASTINGS pleaded that the Government should consider alternative proposals to their scheme.

After Lord HALIFAX had reminded the House that the Government were only carrying out an election pledge, and had promised full consideration to any proposals Lord HASTINGS cared to submit, the Bill was given a Second Reading.

In the Commons at Question-time Mr. EDEN dealt tactfully with a number of anxious inquiries about Spain, and laid emphasis on the fact that the German withdrawal would not affect German participation in the



"Ey, Mother, stop rubbing that there lamp!"

work of the Non-Intervention Committee.

The Labour Party took advantage of the Vote for the Ministry of Labour to attack the attitude of the Government towards the International Labour Office at Geneva, Mr. Herbert Morrison making great copy out of the recent refusal of the British delegation to sign the convention for a 40-hour week for the textile industry; but, as Mr. Brown told him in reply, there were still grave doubts, widely held, about the possibility of working the 40-hour week without causing a drop in wages. This is a point to which the Opposition steadily contrive to blind themselves.

In two of the best speeches of the day Mr. Sandys suggested that firms maintaining a high standard of labour conditions should be awarded a certificate, which they could advertise, and Miss Cazalet attacked the tradition which relegated to domestic servants wretched rooms and carpets which never matched.

Husband Wanted

Sober. Industrious. Willing to work at golf handicap. Shape of eyes, jaw structure good essential. Voice naval or military. Accent Sandhurst or Osborne and London E.C.4. Vocabulary wide, use of same neat. Knowledgeable. Initiative. Able mend fuses. Good hands. Quick at lighting fires. Working knowledge Shakespeare. Tailoring good and frequent. Influential friends. Hearty politics. Hobby (not mediæval history or stamps), preferably profitable. Own philosophy. Some unearned increment desirable, proved good earning capacity essential. Good taste all round. Any height, width, colour. Film star any magnitude not considered. Mention of money disqualifies. No Scots need apply. American preferred, Englishman considered. Stamped addressed envelope.

Poetic Theory

One was run in the other day
Who in a casual kind of way
Advanced, when charged with being blotto,
What might be termed the poets' motto.

"Each to his trade," the culprit cried,
And added, with a good man's pride,
"I am a poet; every poet
Gets drunk at some time, and you know it."

I did not know it; truth to tell,
I thought the man was not quite well;
Till a low whisper came to shake me
Down to my inmost, if you take me.

For I, a bard, have never been
Worse for the blushful hippocrene;
No dalliance with the brown October
Has ever found me aught but sober.

Yet is my output, frankly viewed,
A cause for pride and gratitude?
Might it not nobler be and grander?
I must admit it might, in candour.

Can I have chilled an ardent Muse
By abstinence from heady brews?
Would a long course of serious drinking
Uplift one to the Higher Thinking?

Then, Alcohol, be you my aid.
No, waiter, not the lemonade;
Strong waters for a poet's throttle;
Bring me the gin, and leave the bottle.

Dum-Dum.



"And now will you kindly ring up the police?"

At the Play

"VICTORIA REGINA" (LYRIC)

"'Tis the hour when White Horsed Day
Chases Night Her Mares away
And the gates of Dawn (they say)
Phoebus opes;
And I gather that the Queen
May be uniformly seen,
Should the weather be serene,
On the slopes."

Thus CALVERLEY of the Royal Widow who aroused criticism by keeping herself so long secluded from the public eye except as a distant apparition in her donkey-chaise, and who declined to appear in person at any state ceremonies. They wanted her to resign. What was the use of a Queen who never queened it before the populace and spent two-thirds of the year at Osborne or Balmoral?

The semi-invisibility of VICTORIA after the PRINCE CONSORT'S death, extended by the LORD CHAMBERLAIN'S tact to cover her whole lifetime, is now at an end. The theatrical mists have grown thinner, and she may be uniformly seen from the moment of her accession to the day of her Jubilee.

"Go it, old gal!" she tells her courtiers that rough men in the crowd shouted after her on that occasion of magnificence, and we cannot withhold our tears.

Out of the many episodes in that long life which Mr. LAURENCE HOUSMAN has so lovingly and tirelessly set forth on paper the selection he makes for this play seems excellent; yet no one who has lived any part of his life, however brief, during the reign of the living VICTORIA can help feeling a little tantalised. He is assisting alike at a pretty legend and at a spectacle (sympathetically and humorously presented) of fact. Some one (you would not have to go far) will tell you of the exact manner of speech, the precise behaviour of the old Queen, but there is a quality (by comparison) almost of *Alice in Wonderland* belonging to the young Queen of a hundred years ago who finds suddenly that she can do what she likes and that it is the duty of all these elderly people (yes, even the Duchess) to obey her words.

But words how spoken? With what inflexions of the voice, what gestures and glances? The playwright and his interpreter cannot prevent us from asking whether we ought to say "Yes" or "No" to these. And Miss PAMELA STANLEY'S wonderful performance has for that reason a tendency to seem the more modern the further it recedes into history. But very wonderful it is from end to end; and the dramatist is no less ably served by the fascinating *Prince Consort* of Mr. CARL ESMOND. Almost too debonair and not quite grave enough? Possibly; but it helps the very pretty and delightfully-treated Victorian love-affair which of necessity occupies more than half the play. And certainly *Albert* becomes sufficiently serious at the end, when, playing the perfect statesman, he advises his trustful wife and saves us (it seems) as his last act from almost certain war with America.



INTRODUCTION TO SHAVING
Victoria . . . . MISS PAMELA STANLEY
Prince Albert . . MR. CARL ESMOND

I don't know whom to praise most highly after these. Perhaps Mr. REX WHISTLER for his settings: they keep us conscious that everything, as Mr. HOUSMAN wishes, is rather comical and yet most truly grand; and where Mr. HOUSMAN cannot resist (as at Balmoral) an inclination to become slightly farcical, the divinity that doth hedge a queen is so nearly "tartan throughout" that we do not greatly care whether this is the true JOHN BROWN who speaks, nor whether (if I may also be forgiven) his actual soul goes marching on.

It is perhaps a little unfortunate for Mr. ERNEST MILTON that he plays *Disraeli* in the same scene. He is a good *Disraeli*; but in the extravagant gallantry of the courtier there might well have been, I think, more wheedling and less oratorical rodomontade if the dramatist had not been so intent in this place on sheer fun.

To go backwards for a moment, there is no more charming passage than that in which Miss PENELOPE DUDLEY WARD and Miss MABEL TERRY-LEWIS figure—the one as *Lady Jane*, suspected of a flirtation with her *Albert*, and the other as the tactful adviser of the impetuous young Queen. Nor, in conclusion, dare I withhold my sympathetic admiration for those footmen who for ever and instantly open the august doors of those gorgeous and heavily-furnished palaces. To open the door precisely at the right moment to one who enters the presence foremost may be easy; but to open it to those who leave it backwards and not infrequently rebuked—that must be a harder thing. In any case Mr. HOUSMAN has "done it"; and perhaps he will let me conclude by reverting to my opening *motif* and slightly altering his brother's lines:—

"Censors and fears, the
Night Mare and her Foal
Drown in the golden deluge
of the morn." EVOE.



THE QUIET SURROUNDINGS OF BALMORAL
Victoria . . . . . MISS PAMELA STANLEY
Benjamin Disraeli . . . MR. ERNEST MILTON

"ŒDIPUS TYRANNUS"
(BRADFIELD COLLEGE)

Perhaps it is rather insolent to the high heavens to think that you can have an open-air Greek theatre in

Berkshire. Certainly there came down more or less gentle rains from heaven during the performance of *Œdipus Tyrannus* at Bradfield College, but never sufficient, happily, for rain to stop play.

It would have been a real tragedy if it had, for, with the greatest thoroughness and the most skilled direction, the scholars of Bradfield acquitted themselves like men and Greeks. The Chorus, although most exposed to the elements, have, as usual, the best of it. It is their pleasant part to have the front seats at other people's tragedies and to make loud and emphatic declarations of a depressing nature from time to time.

But *Œdipus* (Mr. J. A. STUART) has little need of a chorus to point out to him that he would be much better dead, for he is very much of that opinion himself and remarks that he would not have been saved from death until now if he were not being reserved for some more terrible fate. Only *Creon*, his brother (Mr. M. D. TUCKER), shows a singular imperviousness to the more than usually ill fortune which has been the lot of *Œdipus*, remarking in the closing sentence of the play that after all *Œdipus* cannot expect to have everything his own way.

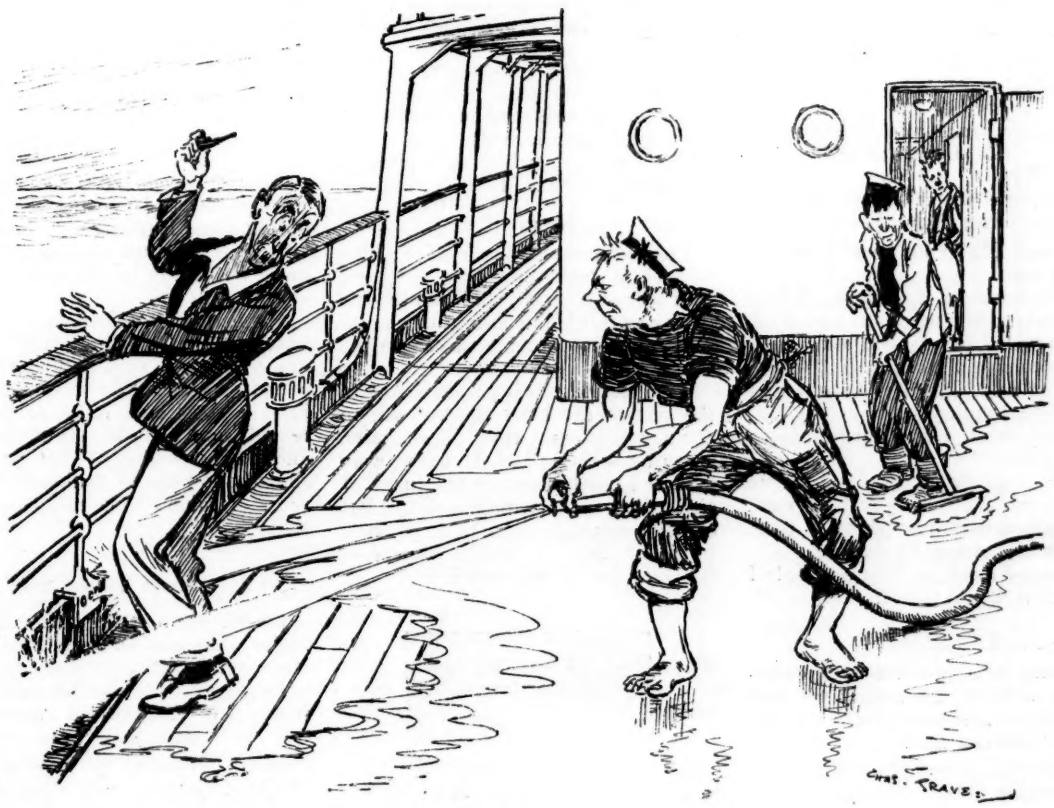
Mr. STUART, in a singularly exacting and exhausting part, seemed to be increasingly at home as disaster proceeded to overtake him. There were moments at the beginning when it was not difficult, closing the eyes, to imagine oneself present at an ordinary commercial altercation, of the kind that keeps life from stagnation in the bazaars of the Levant. But this early scolding soon passes into tragedy, and Mr. STUART, on whom the chief burden falls, steers the piece with a sure hand out of the shallows and into the deep. It is a considerable feat, the more so when aeroplanes fly overhead during important passages, as they cannot be prevented from doing in England now. Perhaps *Jocasta* (Mr. D. N. BRINSON) is a little too well-preserved for her years and her double life, but her youthfulness adds to the fire and intensity with which she sees the unhappy *Œdipus* refusing to desist from the quest for fatal knowledge.

From the nature of the plot, with its preoccupation with a crime committed a generation before, most of the characters are a good age, and this generally proves an advantage when the actors are in fact very young; for old men are easier to act than young ones. Neither the shepherd nor the messenger who brings to *Œdipus* the news that his foster-father is dead have anything to be very pleased about, but it is the last messenger who has the worst tidings, and Mr. D. J. MADDEN sees that they lose nothing in the telling, and acquits himself with a noble zest of his unhappy duties.

But the Chorus are not really dismayed. For all their beards they are a gay crowd, and they are fitted with music which gives a heartening swing to lines whose meaning is sombre enough.

Bradfield College is greatly to be congratulated on breaking away from the chains which have imprisoned it since 1890 in the triple bondage of the *Antigone*, the *Alcestis* and the *Agamemnon*. Nine years ago they acted the *Rhesus*; now they have attempted something much more ambitious and have achieved a memorable success.

D. W.



TECHNIQUE

How to Run a Village Pageant

FIRST of all, do not let us trouble unduly about mere facts. After all, history never repeats itself, so why should *we*? If we have a harbour or a town-hall, our scene is already set for the Boston Tea-Party or the Fall of the Bastille. Let us therefore proceed in the spirit of true pageantry.

1.—THE WORDS

Since, apart from the opening word, no speech is ever audible at a pageant, I here give a list of Opening Words for Different Occasions:—

Ho! So! No! Yo! Zo! Go! Lo! and *Woe!*

These words are to be used respectively for introducing unheard speeches of announcement, agreement, disagreement, nautical or agricultural import, valediction, demonstration and lamentation. The remaining words of the speech may be either the lines of some pleasing and already-known poem, such as the first digression from *Lycidas*, or sentences of more topical interest at the time.

Here we have the favourite pageant-scene of "Drake Hears of the Approaching Armada." (If you have a harbour in your village, I strongly advise you to try this.)

Enter L. *on wrong side of harbour, a* Pinnace *like a fluttered bird.* (*Exit hurriedly.*)

Enter R. (*correct side this time*), *a* Pinnace *like a flustered bird.*

Pinnace. Ho! Your beard's coming off, old man!

Sir F. Drake. So! I know. I keep pretending to bite my lip to keep it on.

Friends and Neighbours. Go! Your beard's coming off, old chap!

Sir F. Drake. No! I've known it for some time, thank you.

Excited Yokel. Lo! Your beard—— Oh, *all* right.

Sir F. Drake (*to sailors*). Yo! Where did they put the spirit-gum? [*Exeunt.*

Spaniards, in distance, defeated. Woe! Hullo, had a shave, Drake?

Chorus of Exulting Natives. Zo! I told him it would fall off, etc.

2.—THE SCENES

Nothing is impossible to a determined producer. Take what you find and *make* your scene out of it. I give two examples of this:—

To make a gasometer fit in to the Roman Occupation Scene (FIG. I.)—

(1) Pierce gasometer. (2) Apply naked flame. (3) Run. (4) Fill the hollow with stakes, tortoises and other impedimenta (FIG. II.).

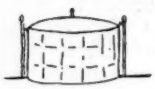


FIG. I.



FIG. II.

To convert the local Workhouse into a Baronial Castle (FIG. III.)—

Cut cleanly along the line A–B. Dig moat (M). Lay door across moat. Hang gate downwards in doorway. Block up half of each window.

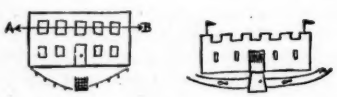


FIG. III.

3.—ODDMENTS

Refuse to be beaten. Adapt what material you have to your present needs.

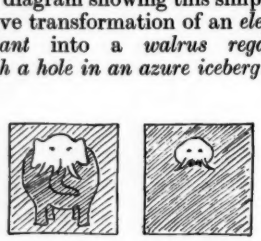
"A primrose by the river's brim
A yellow primrose was to him,
And it was nothing more"—

but to you (and WORDSWORTH) it may rapidly become a pink geranium (with the aid of an ants'-nest) or the deadly nightshade (prussic acid).

For example, when producing a pageant in Burma in '09, I needed a walrus badly (for the Polar Expedition scenes). I had only an elephant.

I placed the animal in front of a blue back-cloth (half-acre pink gingham, with selvedge, dyed) and painted his body *and trunk* blue also, thus eliminating them by merging them into the gingham.

The ears were then pinned firmly to the side of the head (*not* cut off, to avoid waste), and thick black hairs, taken from the tail of the beast, were threaded neatly between the tusks. I give a diagram showing this simple but effective transformation of an *elephant ruminant* into a *walrus regardant through a hole in an azure iceberg.*



The Colonel insists to this day that it *was* a walrus, and is still sticking to barley-and-lemon.

Programmes for Pachyderms

THERE is a rather nice passage in Monsieur EDOUARD HERRIOT'S *Life and Times of Beethoven* about an elephant who, in 1810, was "subjected" to a concert in order to see if he were sensitive to music. Apparently the elephant liked a simple melody played on the violin but disliked it with variations; yawned openly at BOCCHERINI and "a bravura passage of MONSIGNY;" was charmed by the song "Charmante Gabrielle," and was particularly attracted by the horn-player. It is interesting to note that the musicians who made the experiment did not think much of the elephant as a critic, considering his tastes rather naïve and unformed. Nowadays a good many of us would feel that the elephant had the right of it. We too rather suspect violinists' variations, and feel that a yawn is the only possible comment on that BOCCHERINI quartet and most of MONSIGNY, whether bravura or not.

It is therefore with one eye on the possible reactions of posterity that I record my recent experiments with Angus. Angus is that curious phenomenon, a seemingly sane and intelligent man who is genuinely interested in what he calls "modern rhythm music," *i.e.*, fox-trots and so on. He knows the exact personnel of every dance-band, discusses the technique of individual players in most serious and technical terms, and even indulges in the ghastly practice of sitting alone listening to gramophone records of the stuff for hours. All else in the music line, he alleges, leaves him cold.

My bargain with Angus was made purely in the spirit of scientific inquiry. It was agreed that on a certain evening Angus should come to my flat, bringing a selection of his most prized records, and that in return for being allowed to "subject" me to them, should allow me to "subject" him to some of mine. The results were as follows:—

I.—*My Records. Angus as Elephant*

(*a*) MENUHIN playing the Bach E Major Concerto. Elephant listened with mild interest and remarked politely that "the rhythm section was pretty hot." Shook head with a knowing smile and said "Ah, naughty, naughty!" (apparently a compliment) at a passage of double-stopping, but spoiled it by telling me that one JOE VENUTI plays all four strings at once



"AH, MULLIGATAWNY!"

by threading his violin between the hair of the bow and the stick.

(*b*) WANDA LANDOWSKA playing the Italian Concerto. Elephant bored and opined that it was "too long for a piano break."

(*c*) SEGOVIA. Elephant impressed and compared him with one ED LANG—also apparently an ace guitar-thumber.

(*d*) DELIUS, "Walk to the Paradise Garden." Elephant bored. Felt that the orchestrator had done "quite a dirty job" (favourable), but disliked absence of "rhythm." Demonstrated by trying to tap same out with toe.

(*e*) Jupiter Symphony, BEECHAM conducting. Elephant closed eyes early and kept them closed. Possibly enthralled but more probably asleep. Announced with rather pathetic relief that it was "Very nice" at end of first side of last movement. Had not the heart to insist on last side.

(*f*) PERCY GRAINGER'S "Handel in the Strand." Elephant showed signs of keenest pleasure, stamping loudly. At end said that it reminded him of some of the earlier rhythm stuff, and that all that it needed was to be "swung a bit more."

II.—*Angus's Records. Me as Elephant*

Owing to complete inability of elephant to distinguish one from another, detailed observations on each not kept. In general—

(*a*) Elephant showed preference for individual performers rather than for actual tunes. Delighted with CHELSEA QUEELEY and BIX BAEDERBECK. Repeated their names ecstatically to self.

(*b*) Elephant particularly partial to a certain passage for washboard and goofus. Asked if there was a concerto for solo washboard.

(*c*) Elephant liked ED LANG. Felt that he sounded like SEGOVIA under the influence of cheap synthetic alcohol.

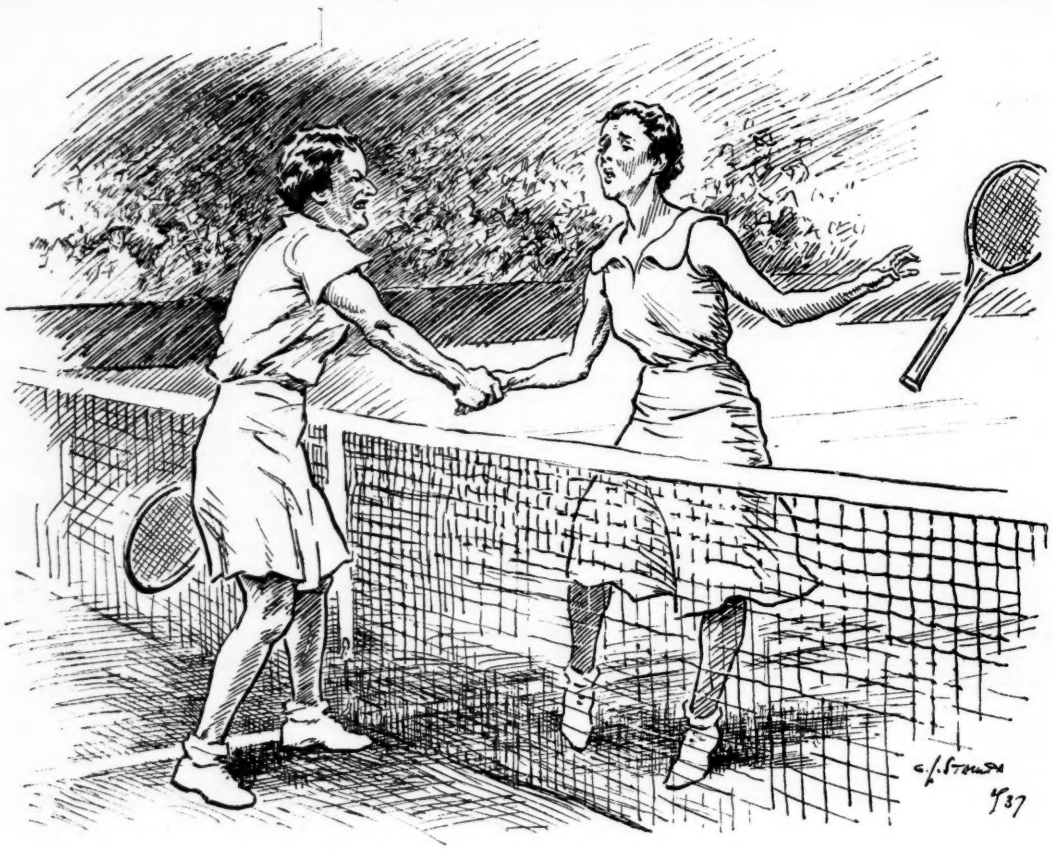
(*d*) Elephant bored by hot "swing" record. Opined that it was so hot that it had melted a bit.

(*e*) Elephant bored by another hot "swing" record. Indignantly accused operator of forgetting to change record after last offence.

(*f*) Elephant exhibited maudlin pleasure at record of "sweet" tune. Claimed to have danced to it in '24. Operator explained that it was only issued last week. Elephant (pointing out infallibility of pachyderm memory) still claimed to have danced to it in '24.

General Report on the Experiment

On the whole the results of the 1810 experiment are confirmed. The elephant likes a simple tune but is easily bored by anything requiring technical enthusiasms or acquired taste. Has a certain appreciation of virtuosity and may "take to" individuals and/or their instruments. Incapable, however, of the higher criticism of an art which he does not understand. Writers on the *pros* and *cons* of musical taste please, *please* note.



THE LOSER'S REVENGE

The Pleasant Evening

"It's *perfectly* simple," said the Trevors—as they invariably do say before launching or pushing their guest into some unspeakably complicated form of paper-game.

This time it only took between twenty minutes and half-an-hour to make us understand what the game was—not counting the General, who never really got beyond saying that this kind of thing wasn't much in his line, and poor Miss Flagge, who just said, "I see. Like a crossword-puzzle," quite a number of times.

The Trevors never replied, as you or I might have done, "No, it isn't." They just went on and on telling us to write some word like *powder* or *throne* upwards and then downwards, and to fill in the spaces with other words, using the first and the last letters.

("Like a crossword-puzzle.")

"*Powder*," said Mrs. Trevor just as her husband, equally smiling and emphatic, repeated "*Throne*." "You you get P opposite R and you might fill it in, say, with *purr* or *prior*."

"Purr," said Charles, in anything but a purring voice.

"Prior," said somebody else—obediently rather than intelligently, it seemed to me.

However, some of us got there at last. In my own case I simply squinted sideways at Mrs. Trevor's paper and then copied down on my own—

P	R
O	E
W	D
D	W
E	O
R	P

And very odd I thought it looked.

"Splendid!" said Mr. Trevor—rather optimistically, unless he only meant that none of us had actually burst into tears of fury and left the room.

Then there was a silence. If the Canon, who was next to me, really muttered what I thought I heard, one could only regret it without being actually surprised. Surprise, however, came when Charles suddenly announced that he'd finished.

"I told you it was quite simple!" cried Mr. Trevor, not perhaps very tactfully. "Now, *do* begin."

"Purr," said Charles angrily.

Both the Trevors at once exclaimed, "No, no, no! That wasn't what they meant *at all*. Charles had to *define* his word without mentioning it outright and we all had to guess what it was."

"Then," said Charles, without very much subtlety, one feared, "it's what a cat does when it's pleased."

Everybody at once looked intelligent and said "Purr."

"Quite right," said Charles in a dazed way.

"Shall we call that a trial trip and begin again?" inquired Mrs. Trevor with a certain effect of forbearance.

"No," said the General, suddenly and strongly.

Mrs. Battlegate—a well-trained wife if ever there was one—created a diversion by remarking modestly and yet with determination, "Something connected with Lucerne."

"*Three Weeks*," I said, and was told afterwards by Laura that it dated me quite hopelessly, and by Mrs. Battlegate

at the time that it wasn't anything in the *least* like that.

"Lake," said Charles. And the Trevors said, "Wait a minute: did we quite know the letters that began and ended Mrs. Battlegate's word?"

Actually it turned out that we didn't, because Mrs. Battlegate and one or two other people had put down *Throne* in contradistinction to the *Powder* school of thought. And the word she had in mind—connected with Lucerne—began with E and ended with O.

"Embryo," said Mr. Trevor, and everybody else said "Oh, good!" except Mrs. Battlegate, who said, "Oh, dear, no."

"Echo," said Charles, and nobody looked more surprised than he did when Mrs. Battlegate admitted he was right. And she explained that many years ago, when quite a girl, she remembered playing a rather pretty piece on the piano called "The Echo of Lucerne."

"Which shows," she said, "that there *is* an echo connected with Lucerne."

And the Trevors said, "Yes, indeed," with an entirely false heartiness.

Their own definitions, when they came to give them, were marked by a certain academic quality that was entirely absent from the efforts of their guests.

"Beginning with E and ending with T. This is connected with a French city," said Mrs. Trevor agreeably.

Two people suggested *Etretat* and seemed hurt when it was declined, and poor Miss Flagge madly urged *Elite* (which she evidently spelled in a rather abbreviated form) and explained that she meant Frenchwomen always dressed so well.

When Mrs. Trevor told us that the word was *Edict* and that she was thinking of Nantes there was just a rather stunned silence.

Personally I was inclined to think my own attempt as good as any.

"Beginning with T and ending with E. This is a bird if another word is put after it, and a soup if another word is in front of it; or it can be all by itself and then it's an animal," I told them simply and clearly. Laura obviously was speaking quite irresponsibly in at once crying aloud, "Mulligatawny!"

Not that any of the other suggestions were much better. And I definitely resented that of Mr. Trevor, which took the form of inquiring whether I was sure I really meant what I'd said. In the end I had to tell them that *turtle*, preceded by *mock*, is a soup, and followed by *dove* becomes a bird.

It was just about then that the General said he thought it must be getting very late indeed.

"Wait!" cried the Canon violently.

Naturally we all did so.

"I'm not sure whether you'll think this fair."

Nobody attempted to contradict him. We just went on waiting.

"It begins with T and it ends with E," said the Canon, looking quite wild. "I'm not at all sure that you'll think it's fair."

"I daresay," said Charles, probably meaning it kindly; but none of us was quite ourselves.

"Beginning with T and ending with E?" said Mrs. Trevor encouragingly. "And what is the definition?"

"A means of transport."

Those who didn't say *train* said *tram*, except, naturally, the talented Trevors. They merely looked thoughtful and repeated, "A means of transport," rather doubtfully.

In the end they asked for a hint.

The Canon, more and more upset, made a curious humming sound. After a time one realised that it was a sort of tune.

"'Over the Sea to Skye,'" said Laura.

Myself I thought it sounded much more like some kind of Gregorian plain-chant. But that may have been just association of ideas.

Even the Trevors seemed to be at a loss, and it carried no conviction to anybody when one of them suggested CHOPIN.

The Canon, looking utterly discouraged, broke off and once more said that we shouldn't think it fair.

Then he hummed again.

"*I've got it!*" screamed Laura. "The Daring Young Man on the——"

"Trapeze!" cried everybody.

"A means of transport," said Mrs. Trevor rather reflectively. "Yes."

"I much prefer a car," said the General coldly. "Thanks for a delightful evening." E. M. D.



"IT WAS ABSOLUTELY ALBERT'S VERY OWN IDEA FOR TRAINING THE SWEET PEAS."

Our Booking-Office

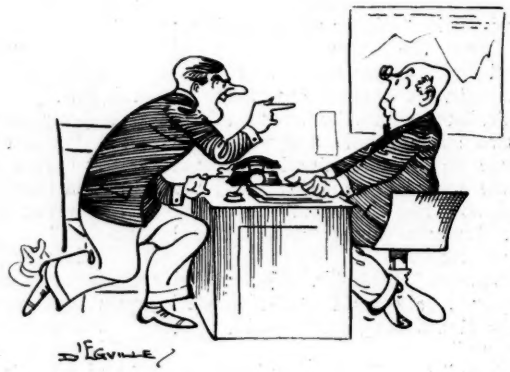
(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

The Right Little Island

Britain and the Beast (DENT, 10/6), edited by Mr. CLOUGH WILLIAMS-ELLIS, contains essays by twenty-six authors and introductory notes by eleven others, and it surveys the whole question of England's vanishing beauty. It deals with urbanisation, the land, sanctuaries, national parks, rural amenities, housing and a host of such subjects, which may all be included under the happily-conceived title. In the words of the wrapper "it faces facts; it faces the prodigal squandering of our lovely heritage." It faces it indeed from so many different points of view that we are filled alternately with despair and hope. On the whole despair would triumph but that the most emphatic pessimists seem luckily to be balanced by no less emphatic optimists. One wants to spend twenty-five millions on national parks as a paying proposition. Another wants every garden, field and preserve laid open to everybody. Mr. R. G. STAPLETON talks of "this small over-populated island," Mr. PATRICK ABERCROMBIE hints that "a circle of twenty-mile radius would contain the whole population of England and Wales, at the rate of twelve houses per acre," and Mr. JOHN GLOAG, a master of the half or three-quarter truth, says that "there is a clean new world awaiting us just round the corner, and it is not likely to be attained by any of the fashionable faiths of the day." It is all rather bewildering, but it makes excellent reading because some of the writers seem to be jostling others and treading on their heels, though they are all making more or less for the same destination. We hope it may help to solve a problem which it almost proves to be insoluble.

The Papacy at the Cross-Roads

The great papist who declared his intention of "dying a penitent Catholic and an impenitent Liberal" would have found *The Pope in Politics* (LOVAT DICKSON, 7/6) a document after his own heart. For here, speaking solely for his own young post-War world, Mr. WILLIAM TEELING has canvassed with qualified sympathy and intense interest the recent political activities of the Vatican. The Great War and the great short-lived pontificate of BENEDICT XV. had left Catholicism in the ascendant—especially in France. Why, Mr. TEELING asks, have the gains turned to losses during the reign of an indefatigable, devoted and peculiarly autocratic Pope? The answer he propounds will interest not only his co-religionists but every student of world-affairs. He regrets the fatal concessions to MUSSOLINI, seeing that the battle between Christianity and the totalitarian state has got to be waged sooner or later. He deplores papal mistrust of youth and the New World, since sustained enthusiasm and dependable financial backing are chiefly predictable from these quarters. PIUS XI. is given his magnificent due as the pioneer of Oriental missions, but the religious aspects of his work are for the most part eschewed in these candid and courageous pages.



"D' YOU MEAN TO TELL ME YOU NEVER RECEIVED MY ESTEEMED ORDER OF THE 14TH ULT?"



"THAT'S THE SORT OF THING WE TRY TO DISCOURAGE."

Defoe Looks Round for a Livelihood

That not very reputable tragi-comedy, the life of *Defoe* (METHUEN, 12/6), well bears retelling in much sympathetic detail by Mr. JAMES SUTHERLAND. Setting out as plain DANIEL FOE, a lower-middle-class Dissenter born (probably) in the year of the Restoration, DEFOE passed through a series of metamorphoses of the most amazing and varied character before he wrote *Robinson Crusoe* when hard on sixty. Out with MONMOUTH as a lad, he ran a tile-factory, acquired a civet-cat farm for the extraction of scent, wrote pamphlets for HARLEY, spied on the Scots—"a fermented and implacable nation," stood in a garlanded pillory while a Whig mob drank his health, wrote some of the best stories in the language and died in hiding—probably from his creditors. His biographer is hardly concerned with the literary feats that make his little turncoat memorable; yet it seems a pity to allow so spacious and complete a biography so little room for their pedigree and appraisement. For the rest Mr. SUTHERLAND is benevolently caustic over a hero with whom (as he wisely and wittily remarks) "bowing in the House of Rimmon . . . had become almost a reflex action."

A Reading of the Universe

"Judged by the standards of the novel," says Mr. OLAF STAPLEDON candidly, "it"—*Star Maker* (METHUEN, 8/6)—"is remarkably bad. In fact it is no novel at all." That does

not get us very far; but elsewhere Mr. STAPLEDON describes his book, more positively and quite accurately, as "an imaginative sketch of the dread but vital whole of things." It is, in fact, an answer to the riddle of the universe, conceived by an adventurous and dauntless imagination and a mind most fertile in invention. It is a dream of the cosmos dreamed on a hillside, like that older dream of *Piers the Plowman* and having something of the same allegorical import. For though it explores the edges of infinity and the backward and forward limits of time, on the visited planets the inhabitants, however odd in appearance or alien in faculty or habit, are often found to be confronted with much the same problems and involved in much the same crises as ourselves. It would be impossible here to follow Mr. STAPLEDON in his voyage through space and the æons, or to give the slightest idea of the events of his "galactic history" or of his philosophic speculations on the nature of the Star Maker; but it may be said that there is a compulsive logic in his most astounding fantasies and that, while he is at ease among the difficult findings of physics and astronomy, he is also a poet in his acceptance of the ultimate mystery of things.

Factual Fiction

From her new novel, *Two Thousand Million Man-Power* (GOLLANCZ, 7/6), it is not clear whether Miss G. E. TREVELYAN'S aim is to emphasise the cruel irrelevance or the complete interdependence of, so to speak, things in general, but its practical effect is to make quite a lot of the book very irritating to read. Her central story is about the ups and downs, domestic and economic, of a suburban couple, and she tries to keep it in a kind of universal perspective by a parallel recital of contemporary headlines culled from all over the world. These cover the actual happenings of the post-War period. Sometimes they are of significance and sometimes not; the reader is just as likely to learn that while *Katherine* is telephoning for tinned food a field-mouse is being fatally crushed by a steam-tractor in Japan as that while *Robert* is being sacked from his job at the face-cream factory a man called MUSSOLINI is marching on Rome. Exactly as if a fiction-film were thickly sprinkled with indiscriminate sequences from any number of newsreels, it is not a method calculated to sustain continuity of interest, and the story here is in any case slight enough. The description of *Robert's* experience of desperate unemployment is much



IN THE PARK



Stout Party. "NOW, BOY, WHY DON'T YOU BE PERLITE AND GET UP AND GIVE ONE OF THESE YOUNG LADIES A SEAT?"

Cheeky Boy. "NOT ME! WHY DON'T *YOU* GET UP AND GIVE THEM BOTH A SEAT?"

Phil May, July 4th, 1900.

the best part of the book, and it reveals in Miss TREVELYAN an understanding and a strength of expression which deserve a more coherent frame.

The Ethics of Chesterton

M. EMILE CAMMAERTS has written a book about G. K. CHESTERTON which is neither a Life nor, in the ordinary sense, a critical appreciation of his position in English literature. "It deals," as the author says in an Introduction, "almost entirely with his moral outlook"—with the philosophy on which he founded his life and the manner in which that philosophy shaped and inspired his written work. To understand the ethics of CHESTERTON is to understand fully what he wrote. For CHESTERTON—and this is M. CAMMAERTS' main point—was not primarily a humorist who chose now and again to touch on serious subjects, but a faithful crusader who used his gift of humour to point and popularise the message he wished so earnestly to deliver. There is much in this book with which the reader will quarrel gently—not least perhaps with the title, *The Laughing Prophet* (METHUEN, 8/6), which M. CAMMAERTS himself admits was chosen "not without some reluctance," but it is a stimulating, interesting and always readable study of CHESTERTON the Christian.

Love and Detection

Perhaps the crime that the infallible *Lord Peter Wimsey* solves so swiftly during his *Busman's Honeymoon* (GOLLANCZ, 8/6)—the corpse being found in the cellar of the charming old Hertfordshire farmhouse to which he had taken his hard-won bride, *Harriet Vane*—was just a little too ingenious for its supposed inventor to have contrived; and perhaps Miss DOROTHY SAYERS has been somewhat less conscientious and less concentrated on the main issue than usual—if indeed the crime and not the honeymoon is the main issue. *Lord Peter* is as admirable a lover as he is a detective and as unexpected in method. And that the author should have made her romantic interlude so plausible in the unlikely circumstances and indeed so sensitive and imaginative in detail is, as we say (and shouldn't), "no mean achievement." There are a dozen well-invented characters, a perfunctory dummy or two and some old friends reintroduced. Of the new characters we must all respect honest *Inspector Kirk*, who can follow a scent, drop an aitch and cap a quotation with the best. As for *Lord Peter's* faithful and resourceful *Bunter*, surely Dr. INGE can no longer fairly complain that modern novelists are incapable of inventing a noble character! It is a refreshing novelty that in the case of *Busman's Honeymoon* the play preceded the book—a reversal of the usual order—which gains Miss SAYERS a mark for originality.



"ANY CHANCE OF SEEING MR. TULKINGHORN THIS MORNING?"

"WELL, YOU 'LL HAVE A LONG WAIT; HE HASN'T BEEN IN YESTERDAY YET."

Universality

Mr. ALAN D'EGVILLE, last of a famous line of masters of music and ballet, has worked his passage to see the world. He is himself, as one might expect, "rather a nifty dancer"; he has a gift of tongues and of persuasive speech; he is a champion skier, a caricaturist of repute, and a partially qualified motor-mechanic. In the exercise of his one outstanding profession—a willingness to turn his hand to any mortal thing required of him—he has drawn, or danced, or interpreted, or run a country club, in half a score of countries, and he is still going on. His way to see Egypt was to conduct a party of tourists there, and he tells it as a good story against himself that he promptly lost his party. Making his own jokes and not being ashamed to be amused at them, he expresses most things in life in terms of laughter. In *Adventures in Safety* (SAMPSON LOW, 12/6) the laughter comes perhaps sometimes too easily and too obviously, but life to the writer is one long exuberance, and maybe it would be churlish to ask him to sample still one more occupation by editing his own production.

Vanity

The Affair of the Scarlet Crab (GOLLANCZ, 7/6) was considered to be the best detective story in an American competition, and it is easy to applaud the judges' decision. For Mr. CLIFFORD KNIGHT, in his account of an expedition that started with high hopes and ended in disaster, keeps a steady course and balances his tale to a nicety. When *Carlos Lanfrey*, a wealthy American, set forth in his luxurious yacht with a team of scientists to the Galapagos Islands he had reason to expect a happy voyage. Then mysterious tragedies began to occur, and science was driven off the map by crime. But although the number of Mr. KNIGHT'S culprits is strictly limited, he is an artist in distributing suspicion, and if his climax is surprising it will also be intelligible to those who know the evil power of envy.

Orientals

Mr. Sherrett York and his dog, *John Butz*, take the chief honours in *Ivory Ladies* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 7/6), but *York's* secretary is at once so competent and so silly that she deserves more than a word of praise. Mr. GAVIN HOLT gets quickly off the mark with a murder during the dark hours of the night in Paternoster Row; and then the hunt for a statuette and for those who were remorseless in their efforts to obtain it begins and continues at a fine pace. *York*, it is true, was often checked in the chase after wily and unscrupulous Chinamen, but Mr. HOLT never allows his rather reckless investigator to stray far from the trail. A sound story, which runs on lines familiar to readers of sensational fiction.



ONLY PARTLY TEETOTALITARIAN

HE was standing quietly by himself in a corner with a far-away look in his eye and a dish of salted almonds at his elbow. As he nibbled, his boldly—not to say massively—chiselled nose and chin appeared to clash together like the fabled Symplegades. We hailed him with the relief that comes to those who recognise an old acquaintance at a sherry-party.

"Why, Sir," we cried, "this is an unexpected pleasure. Well met, indeed!"

"H'm," said Mr. Punch, with a marked lack of enthusiasm, "I suppose you've come for that tiresome bi-annual interview you always insist on. You appear in some odd places and in a number of different disguises, but it comes to the same thing in the end. What exactly are you representing this time?"

"Oh, we're the Man in the Street, or Constant Reader, or an Elderly Party—anything you like, really. But may we have your views——"

"You can have my views on the Gordon Bennett Balloon Race for all I care," he said resignedly, "if you'll get me another glass of sherry. These almonds are dry work. I'm practically a pillar of salt already."

We got him his sherry (by robbing a Suffragan Bishop when his back was turned) and when he had sufficiently refreshed himself the following conversation took place:—

Mr. Punch. Ha! That's better.

Ourselves (or Elderly Party). The withdrawal of Italy and Germany from the Naval Control in Spanish waters constitutes a severe setback to our hopes of a general European settlement to take the place of the Locarno Pact, don't you think?

Mr. Punch. One so seldom gets a sherry that's dry enough at these parties. One wants a *dry* sherry at half-past six, I always say. But this is excellent, excellent.

Elderly Party. Come, Sir! MUSSOLINI——

Mr. Punch. Don't you dare!

Elderly Party. Very well, then. That leaves HITLER.

Mr. Punch. All right, all right. I will talk to you about HITLER. What does HITLER want? I don't know—a good many things probably, but one thing he keeps on saying he wants is a friendly understanding with this country. What stands in the way of that? I'll tell you. His treatment of the Jews and Catholics. We

have many Jews and Catholics in England who feel very bitterly about that—and one does not have to be either the one or the other to have a healthy dislike for bullying. That 's the first point. Point two is that I do not believe the German people know *how* to be friends. Perhaps they are not quite adult. They seem to think that an exhibition of wayward bad manners will make them universally admired. They cancel invitations, don't answer notes, walk out of meetings, take offence at nothing and talk and talk about their dignity when all the time they are behaving like silly schoolboys. Well, we can't be bothered with that kind of childishness. Just look at the postponement of Baron VON NEURATH'S visit—there 's a typical bit of German coyness. But I don't honestly think it impresses anyone over here. Such a pity, because they 're delightful people, really. Have a stuffed olive, won't you?

Elderly Party. That was splendid. You *are* in voice this evening. One can't help wishing you would say a word or two about MUSSOLINI while you are in this vein. Don't you like him, or what is it?

Mr. Punch. I know of him—like Mr. LANSBURY—and he knows of me; at any rate he knows enough of me to refuse me admittance into Italy from time to time. I don't know whether that applies to Mr. LANSBURY as well. But as for MUSSOLINI, well, if he chooses to tie himself to HITLER'S apron-strings and call that "the solidarity of the Rome-Berlin axis," good luck to him. But I don't believe he 'll relish that position for very long. Dictators make poorish junior partners. Then we shall see what we shall see.

Elderly Party. You take a pretty gloomy view of the situation then?

Mr. Punch. I don't take a gloomy view of anything for long, unless perhaps it might be salted almonds. It's agin my nature. There isn't going to be a Great European Conflagration or any nonsense of that kind. England is strong again for one thing—and Europe knows it.

Elderly Party. You mean re-armament and all that?

Mr. Punch. Partly that, certainly; but I was thinking chiefly of the Empire as a whole, and as a unity. I believe Europe had begun to think of the British Empire as a thing of the past, a mere empty shell ready to crumble at the first touch—until the Coronation.

Elderly Party. Ah! The Coronation! That was a great day. See, here are two sherries on their way to the Suffragan Bishop. Let us intercept them and drink a health unto Their Majesties.

Mr. Punch. With all my heart. The King!

Elderly Party. The Queen!

Mr. Punch. Queen Mary!

Elderly Party. The Princesses!

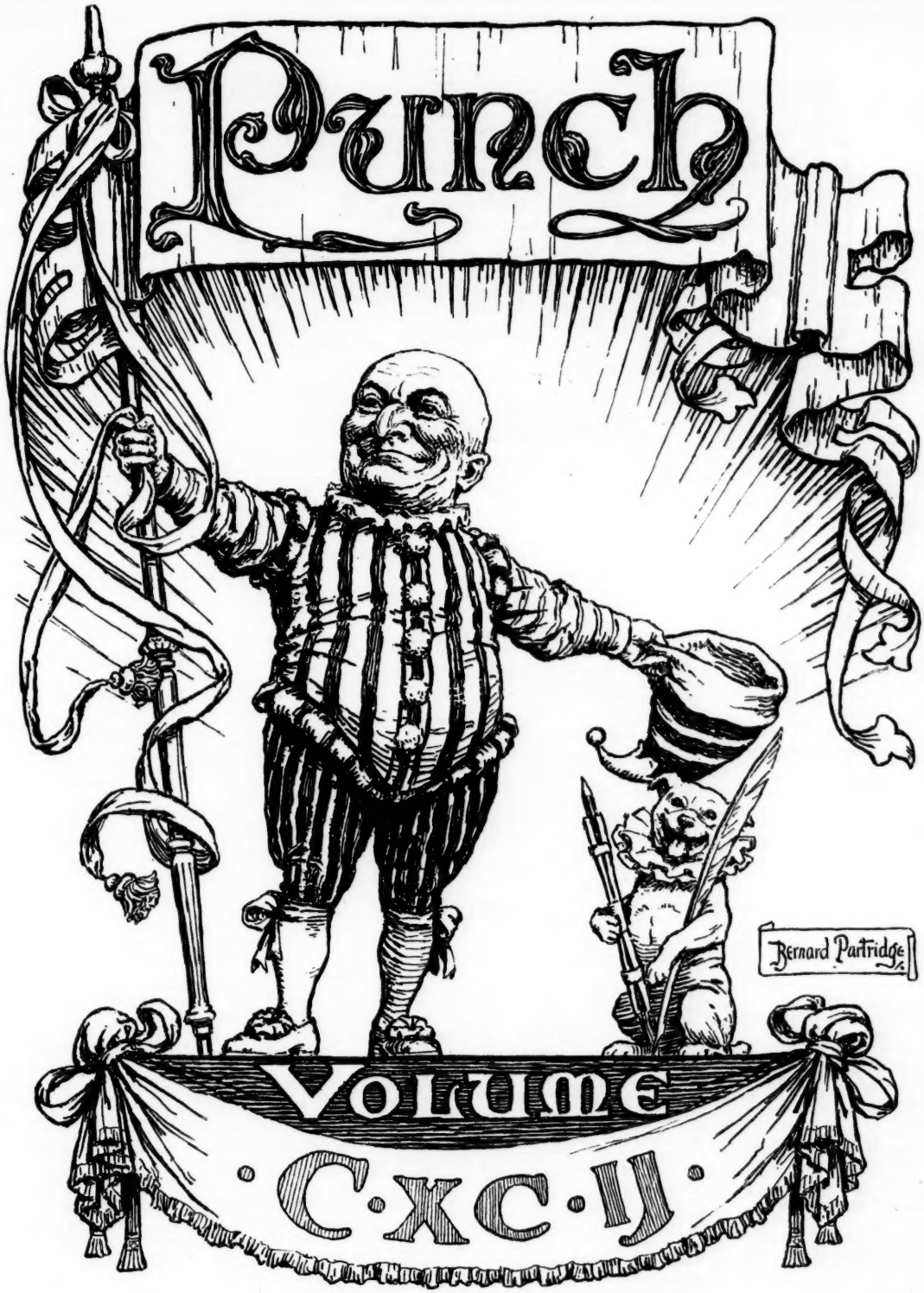
Mr. Punch Long life and happiness to them all! And may they accept, as a loyal and humble gift in this their Coronation Year, my

One Hundred and Ninety-Second Volume



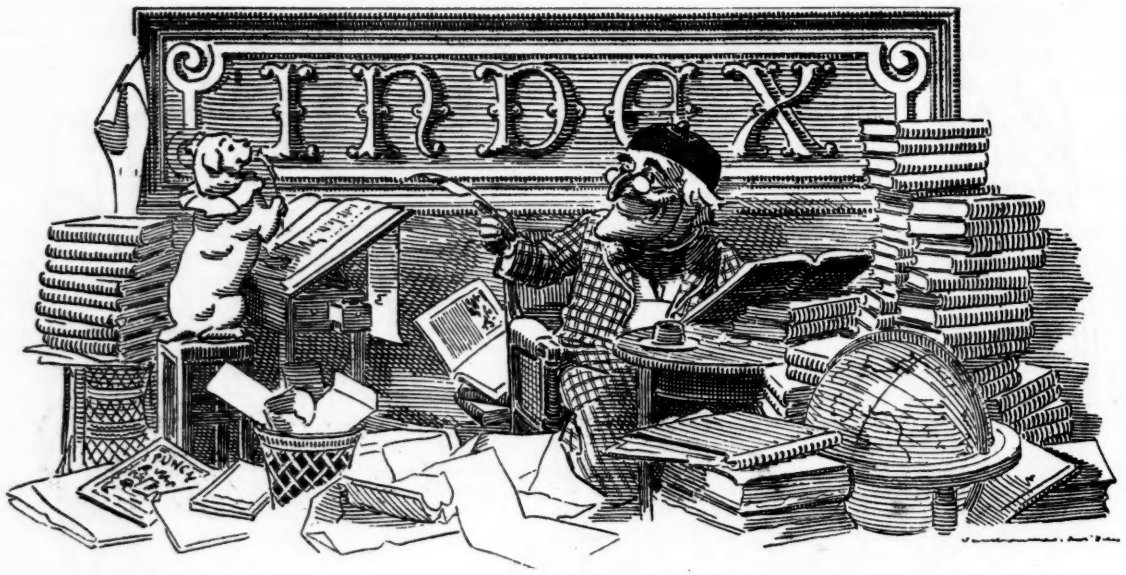
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